Public Scoping Packet

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park and Point Reyes National Seashore Air Tour Management Plans

Environmental Assessment

Lead Agency: Federal Aviation Administration

Cooperating Agency: National Park Service

August 2, 2011 - Version 2

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment, Notice of Public Meetings, and Notice to Request Public Scoping Comments for the Air Tour Management Plan Program at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park and Point Reyes National Seashore

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment, Notice of Public Meetings, and Notice to Request Public Scoping Comments

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The FAA, with the National Park Service (NPS) as a cooperating agency, has initiated development of Air Tour Management Plans (ATMPs) for Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and Point Reyes National Seashore (the Seashore). The ATMP for GGNRA will include Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site, both directly managed by GGNRA, and the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (SF Maritime NHP), an independently managed national park unit adjacent to GGNRA.

The ATMPs are being developed pursuant to the National Parks Air Tour Management Act (*NPATMA*) of 2000 (Public Law 106-181) and its implementing regulations (14 Code of Federal Regulation [CFR] Part 136, Subpart B, *National Parks Air Tour Management*). Per section 40128(b)(1)(B) of *NPATMA*, the objective of an ATMP shall be to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations upon the natural and cultural resources, visitor experiences and tribal lands within or abutting GGNRA and the Seashore. It should be noted that an ATMP has no authorization over other non-air-tour operations such as military and general aviation. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and FAA Order 1050.1E, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared.

The FAA has granted Interim Operating Authority (IOA) to two commercial air tour operators to conduct air tours over GGNRA, SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore.

The FAA and NPS are now inviting the public, agencies, tribes, and other interested parties to provide comments, suggestions, and input on the scope of issues and range of alternatives to be addressed in the environmental process.

The FAA and NPS are also hosting public scoping meetings to inform the public and other interested parties about the ATMP program and to provide the opportunity for comments.

DATES: By this notice, the FAA is requesting comments on the scope of the EA for the individual ATMPs at GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore. Comments must be submitted by September 28, 2011.

MEETINGS: The meetings will be held at the following location, dates, and times:

August 16, 2011: 4:30 – 6:30 PM
GGNRA Headquarters
Fort Mason Building 201
San Francisco, CA

August 17, 2011: 4:30 – 6:30 PM
Bay Model Visitor Center
2100 Bridgeway
Sausalito, CA

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Keith Lusk — Mailing address: P.O. Box 92007, Los Angeles, California 90009-2007. Telephone: (310) 725-3808. Street address: 15000 Aviation Boulevard, Lawndale, California 90261.

Written comments on the scope of the EA should be submitted electronically via the electronic public comment form on the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment website at: http://parkplanning.nps.gov/BayArea_ATMP, provided in writing at one of the public meetings/open houses, or sent to the mailing address above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A public scoping packet that describes the project in greater detail is available at:

- http://parkplanning.nps.gov/BayArea_ATMP
- www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/arc/programs/air_tour_management_plan/

Notice Regarding FOIA: Individuals may request that their name and/or address be withheld from public disclosure. If you wish to do this, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. Commentators using the website can make such a request by checking the box "keep my contact information private." Such requests will be honored to the extent allowable by law, but you should be aware that pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, your name and address may be disclosed. We will make all submissions from organizations, businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety.

Larry Tonish,
Program Manager, Special Programs Staff, Western-Pacific Region

Part 1: Introduction to the Project

A. National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 (NPATMA)

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), in cooperation with the National Park Service (NPS), has initiated development of an Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP) for Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and a separate ATMP for Point Reyes National Seashore (the Seashore), pursuant to the *National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 (NPATMA)*. The ATMP for GGNRA will include Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site, both directly managed by GGNRA, and the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (SF Maritime NHP), an independently managed national park unit adjacent to GGNRA (see Figure 1 on page 5).

The *NPATMA* and its implementing regulations (Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 136) require the FAA and NPS to develop an ATMP for each unit of the national park system or tribal land that does not have a plan in effect at the time an operator applies for FAA authority to conduct commercial air tours. The objective of an ATMP shall be to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations upon the natural and cultural resources, visitor experiences and tribal lands within or abutting GGNRA and the Seashore.

A commercial air tour operation is defined as a flight conducted for compensation or hire in a powered aircraft where the purpose of the flight is sightseeing, during which the aircraft flies below a minimum altitude of 5,000 feet above ground level (AGL). The *NPATMA* applies to any person who conducts a commercial air tour operation over a unit of the national park system, over tribal lands that are within or abutting a unit of the national park system, or over any area within ½-mile outside a unit of the national park system.

Several steps are required for the development and implementation of an ATMP. First, as required by NEPA, the FAA and NPS will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) for public review addressing potential environmental impacts of alternative ATMP strategies for GGNRA, SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore. If no significant environmental impacts are identified, the FAA in cooperation with the NPS will prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Record of Decision (ROD)[1]. The ROD will identify a preferred alternative for the ATMP at GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP, and a preferred alternative for the ATMP at the Seashore. Based on the preferred alternative, the agencies will develop (maybe concurrently) an ATMP for GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP, and a separate ATMP for the Seashore, which will identify specific measures and conditions applying to air tour operations for GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore, respectively. The ATMPs may include the conditions for conducting commercial

[1] FAA's NEPA guidance, 1050.1E, recommends the preparation of a ROD, in addition to the FONSI, when the proposed action is of a unique nature and involves an action without FAA precedent.

air tour operations and other administrative requirements, such as transferability or termination of Operating Authority, handling requests for increase in Operating Authority, and reporting requirements. The last step in the process is FAA rulemaking, to establish enforceable rules for implementing the ATMPs.

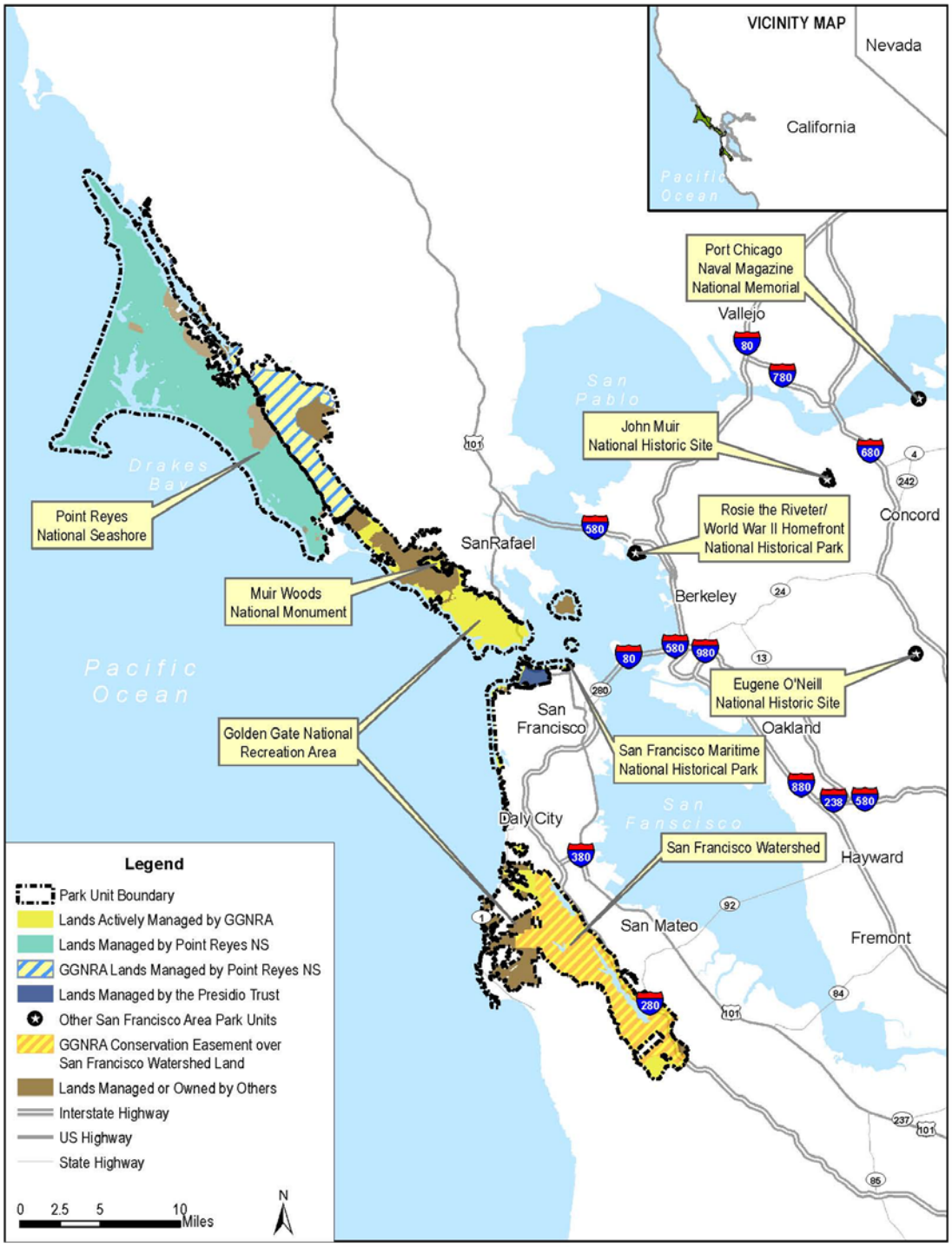

Figure 1. San Francisco Area Park Units

The FAA has granted Interim Operating Authority (IOA) to two commercial air tour operators to conduct air tours over GGNRA, SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore (Table 1). As indicated in Table 1, San Francisco Helicopter Tours

has been granted 2,900 flights per year at GGNRA, SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore under the existing IOA, while San Francisco Seaplane Tours has been granted 2,190 flights per year at those same parks. Although the two operators have been granted IOA for a total of 5,090 annual flights over the Seashore, they are not currently operating air tours over the Seashore.

In order to determine IOA, each existing operator was required by 14 CFR Part 136 to report the greater of (a) the number of commercial air tour operations conducted during the 12-month period preceding *NPATMA* or (b) the average number of commercial air tour operations conducted by the operator during the three-year period preceding *NPATMA*. The number of existing operations reported by each operator represents the IOA. Air tour operators can fly up to their IOA level annually. IOA terminates 180 days after an ATMP has been established for the park.

Table 1. Air Tour Operators with Interim Operating Authority to Conduct Air Tours at GGNRA, SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore

Existing Operators with IOA	Flights per Year under IOA		
	GGNRA	SF Maritime NHP	The Seashore
San Francisco Helicopter Tours	2,900	2,900	2,900
San Francisco Seaplane Tours	2,190	2,190	2,190

B. ATMP Development and the NEPA Process

The *NPATMA* and 14 CFR Part 136 specifically require that the environmental impacts of an ATMP be assessed under NEPA and its implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The assessment of commercial air tour operations on units of the national park system is different in many respects from other aviation assessments. Air tour aircraft operations differ from the average national air transportation system operations, occurring in most cases seasonally, and only during daylight hours. Air tour aircraft are by nature flying low for sightseeing purposes, and in national parks are often operating relatively close to the ground in low ambient sound environments. These factors require specialized noise assessment. The assessment of visual effects is more rigorous when aircraft are in closer visual range of ground visitors in national parks and there is more potential for intrusion on scenic views. Depending on the environment to be viewed, air tour aircraft may also fly at higher altitudes to get a more panoramic perspective. For all these reasons, this assessment of

commercial air tour operations over park units is highly specialized and is not applicable to other types of environmental impact analysis.

The FAA and NPS have determined that an EA will be prepared for the separate ATMPs at GGNRA and the Seashore. For the purposes of complying with NEPA regulations, the FAA is the lead agency, and the NPS is a cooperating agency. Under *NPATMA* both the FAA Administrator and NPS Director shall each sign the environmental decision document.

The FAA and NPS are inviting the public, agencies, tribes, and other interested parties to provide comments, suggestions, and input regarding the ATMP for GGNRA and the ATMP for the Seashore. Generally speaking, the agencies would like to know about any concerns or ideas the public has regarding commercial air tour operations at GGNRA and the Seashore and their management. Key questions to consider when providing input are: Are there any significant issues the agencies need to consider during the planning process, such as potential impacts on natural, cultural and historic resources, and visitor experience on the ground? Are there ATMP alternatives that should be considered in the EA in addition to the current IOA limits?

Instructions for submitting comments as well as the date and location of the public meeting may be found in the Notice of Intent, provided at the beginning of this scoping packet.

After considering input from the public scoping process, the FAA in cooperation with the NPS will prepare an EA for public review and comment.

In addition, to be inclusive of all SF area national park units, the FAA and NPS are also disseminating this information to the following parks and their respective stakeholder mailing lists in the scoping process: Rosie the Riveter/World War II Homefront National Historical Park, John Muir National Historic Site, Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site, and Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial. No air tour operators have been granted IOA to operate tours over these other SF area national park units.

If, after finalizing the EA, no significant impacts are found, a FONSI and a ROD will be prepared.

Additional information on the ATMP Program in general is available at:
http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/arc/programs/air_tour_management_plan/

Interested parties may request information regarding the development of the ATMP for GGNRA or the ATMP for the Seashore, as well as other parks' ATMPs, on this website.

********** **End Part 1** **********

Part 2: Setting

A. Introduction

This section describes the setting at GGNRA, the Seashore, SF Maritime NHP and other San Francisco area national park units. Descriptions of the park's natural and cultural resources, visitor experiences, and current commercial air tour activity are provided to assist the public and other interested parties in preparing meaningful comments. The most useful comments are those that address the scope of analysis, present significant issues, and suggest reasonable alternatives.

The *NPATMA* limits applicability of the ATMP to commercial air tour operations conducted within GGNRA and the area within ½-mile of its boundary, and to operations conducted within the Seashore and the area within ½-mile of its boundary. A commercial air tour operation is defined as a flight conducted for compensation or hire in a powered aircraft where the purpose of the flight is sightseeing, during which the aircraft flies below a minimum altitude of 5,000 feet above ground level (AGL).

B. Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA)

GGNRA is located in the densely populated San Francisco Bay Area in northern California. Established by the US Congress in 1972, the jurisdictional boundary of GGNRA encompasses over 79,000 acres, 60 miles of bay and ocean shoreline and is comprised of numerous smaller contiguous and non-contiguous park areas throughout the Bay Area (see Figure 2 on page 10 and Figure 3 on page 11). It is one of the world's largest urban national parks. Over 7 million people live within a 1-hour drive of GGNRA.

GGNRA contains a wide variety of habitats and resources including a remnant undeveloped coastal corridor of marine, estuarine, and terrestrial ecosystems that provide a refuge for one of the largest concentrations of rare, threatened and endangered species in the national park system. GGNRA also includes the largest and most complete collection of military installations and fortifications dating from 1776 including the Presidio of San Francisco; Alcatraz Island, the nation's first military prison; indigenous archeological sites with native heritage, historic, and scientific values; and internationally recognized scenic views of Golden Gate's coastal headlands set against the backdrop of San Francisco. The GGNRA is visited by about 17 million people each year from across the US and around the world.

The stated purpose for which Congress established GGNRA is to offer national park experiences to a large and diverse urban population while preserving and interpreting GGNRA outstanding natural, historic, scenic, and recreational values.

Muir Woods National Monument (Muir Woods), located north of the Golden Gate Bridge, is surrounded and managed by GGNRA. Muir Woods was established by presidential proclamation in 1908 as the nation's seventh national monument. Establishment of Muir Woods is an important manifestation of early 20th century conservation history. It was among the first national monuments designated under the Antiquities Act of 1906, and the very first made up from privately-donated lands. It set a precedent for the designation of other monuments and parks through private donation.

Muir Woods is a remnant of ancient coastal redwood forest with some trees over 1,000 years old, and a quiet sanctuary near the urban San Francisco metropolitan area. The purpose of Muir Woods, from its enabling legislation, is to preserve the primeval character and ecological integrity of the old-growth redwood forest for scientific values and inspiration.

Fort Point National Historic Site, at the northern tip of the San Francisco peninsula, lies at the southern anchorage of the Golden Gate Bridge beneath an arch supporting the bridge roadway. Constructed over eight years, from 1853 to 1861, the Fort was manned and armed with cannons to protect San Francisco throughout the Civil War. The Fort never came under attack. Due to its architectural significance, it was incorporated into the design of the Golden Gate Bridge during its construction from 1933 to 1937. In 1970, Fort Point was declared a National Historic Site and became a unit of GGNRA following its establishment in 1972. The site provides park visitors with a dramatic view of the Bridge and the wave energy at the Golden Gate and a chance to explore and learn about the unique architecture, history and setting of the Fort itself,

The term GGNRA in this section will refer collectively to all national park service lands managed by GGNRA, including Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site at the northern tip of the Presidio of San Francisco. Where information specific to Muir Woods National Monument is provided, the term Muir Woods will be used.

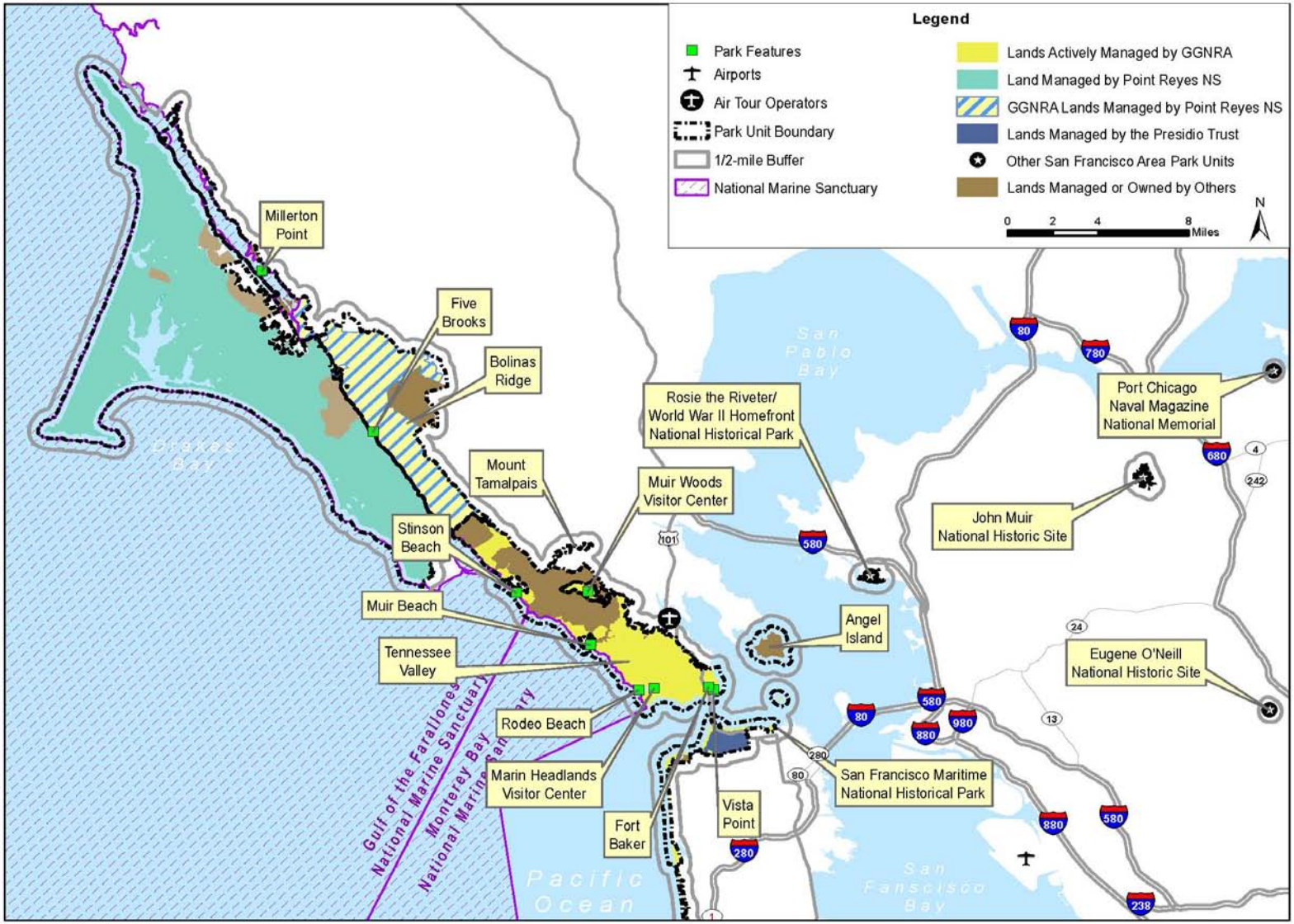

Figure 2. General Features of Golden Gate National Recreation Area – North of Golden Gate Bridge.

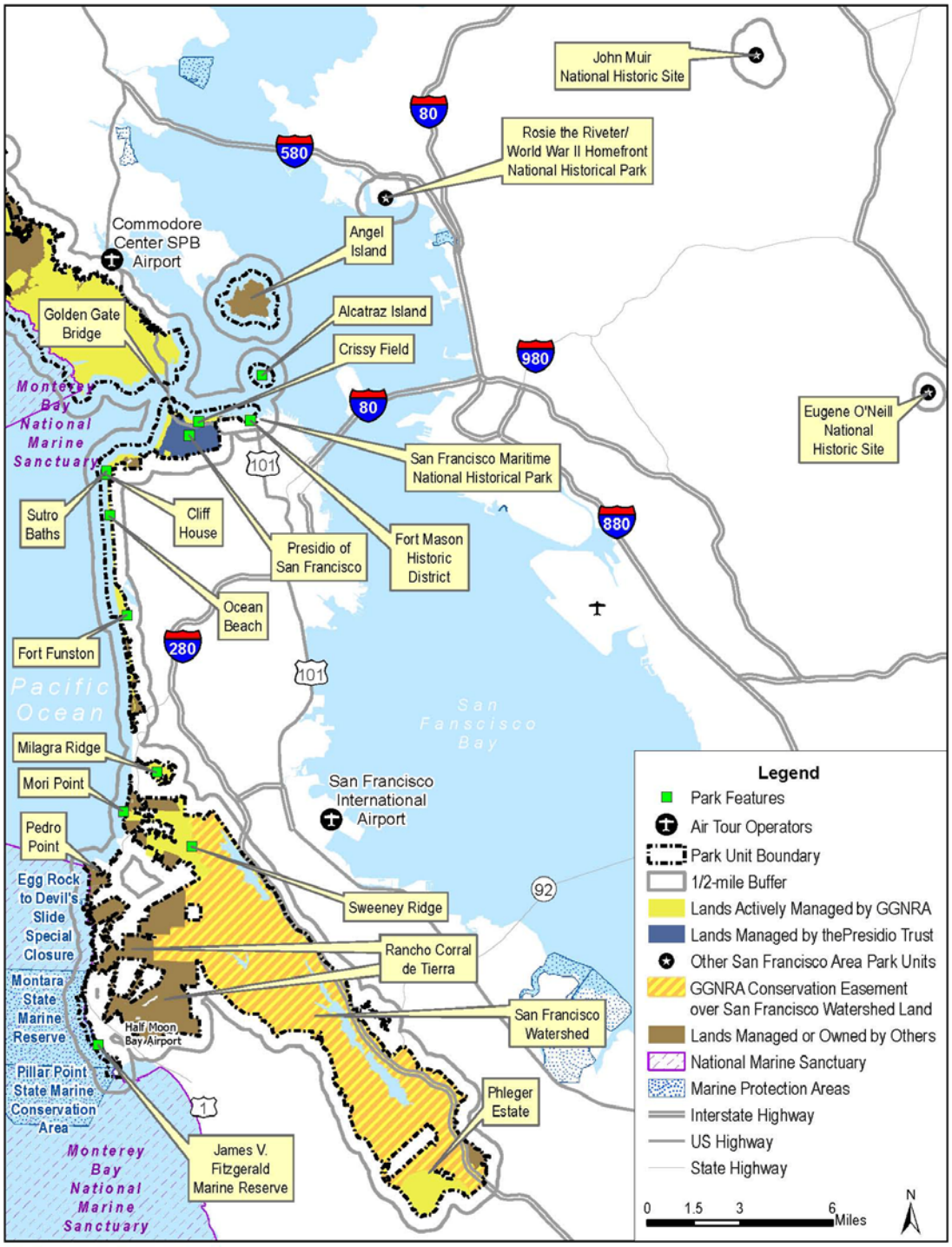

Figure 3. General Features of Golden Gate National Recreation Area – South of Golden Gate Bridge.

Noise/Soundscape

Some areas of the GGNRA provide visitors with natural soundscapes – where a person with normal hearing can hear nothing but the sounds produced by natural components of the environment. It may include “silence” or “natural quiet” — the apparent absence of any sound; or the rush of air over the wings of a soaring bird; the gentle swish of the wind in the trees; or the overwhelming crash and roar of the ocean on a stormy day. Most often, natural quiet is thought of as a mixture of mostly low-decibel background sounds, punctuated by the calls and clatter of wildlife. While much of GGNRA is no longer naturally quiet, it may be critical to wildlife to minimize human caused sound. Aircraft, watercraft, and road traffic outside GGNRA all contribute to noise levels within GGNRA. Human-caused noise generated inside GGNRA includes not only visitor noise (such as vehicles, dogs, and voices), but noise generated by staff (vehicles, power equipment, and voices).

Biological Resources

GGNRA contains a rich assemblage of coastal native plant and animal habitat that includes forests, coastal scrub, grassland, freshwater, estuarine and marine habitats, beaches, coastal cliffs, and islands.

The confluence of unique and diverse habitats adjacent to the urban San Francisco Bay Area has resulted in GGNRA being home to one of the largest numbers of federally listed threatened and endangered species in the national park system. Thirty-six threatened and endangered species exist within GGNRA’s legislative boundaries. Nearly 53 species of mammals, 250 species of birds, 20 species of reptiles, and 11 species of amphibians are found within GGNRA. Over half of North American avian species and nearly one third of California's plant species are found in GGNRA. Alcatraz Island supports one of the largest concentrations of colonial nesting waterbirds in the San Francisco Bay Area; many areas are closed during breeding season to provide protection.

Muir Woods is home to over 50 species of birds, coho and steelhead salmon, and invertebrates like butterflies and slugs. There are also 10 different bat species residing within Muir Woods. Muir Woods is one of the last remaining old-growth coastal redwood forests in the United States, and provides a unique opportunity for visitors to experience a primeval redwood forest so close to an urban area.

GGNRA’s boundary extend a ¼-mile offshore and overlaps with the boundaries of the Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries. Marine life found in the sanctuaries includes gray whales, elephant seals, harbor seals, California sea lions, great white sharks, common murres, and other sea birds. Surf scoters, cormorants, grebes, and scaup gather seasonally along the shore.

GGNRA, along with the Seashore, is part of the United Nations-designated Golden Gate International Biosphere Reserve. Biosphere reserves are areas of terrestrial and coastal ecosystems promoting solutions to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. They are internationally recognized, nominated by national governments and remain under sovereign jurisdiction of the states where they are located. Biosphere reserves serve in some ways as 'living laboratories' for testing out and demonstrating integrated management of land, water and biodiversity. This reserve is unique in that it spans marine, coastal, and upland resources adjacent to a major metropolitan area, and thus provides easy access to outdoor education and recreation for the inhabitants of the San Francisco metropolitan area.

Water Resources

Oceanic conditions such as tides, currents, waves, surf, upwelling, and sea level, influence GGNRA's coastal environment, including climate and the land. Water resources in GGNRA support coastal corridor ecosystems, which include groundwater sources (aquifers and springs); freshwater systems (streams, lakes, and ponds); coastal, estuarine, and marine water resources (the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay); and other wetlands.

Geological Resources

GGNRA is in a seismically active area, located along the San Andreas Fault and above a subduction zone. The topographical relief of GGNRA ranges from sea level to 2,300 feet above mean sea level near the top of Mt. Tamalpais. GGNRA has a diversity of rock types and deposits representing more than 100 million years.

Cultural Resources: Archaeological Resources, Historic Resources, and Cultural Landscapes

Archaeological Resources

GGNRA lands are within the traditional homelands of Coast Miwok and Ohlone people, containing indigenous archaeological sites with native heritage, historic, and scientific values. There are 61 recorded archaeological sites, including sites from the Spanish and Mexican periods.

Historic Resources

There are 739 historic structures in GGNRA, including five National Historic Landmarks and 12 National Register properties. The historic landmarks include: The Presidio of San Francisco, Fort Point National Historic Site, San Francisco Port of Embarkation, Alcatraz Island, and San Francisco Bay Discovery Site (Portola Site Acquisition Monument).

GGNRA includes one of the largest and most complete collections of military installations and fortifications in the country, dating from Spanish settlement in 1776 through the 20th century. These installations served as command post for the army in the Western United States and the Pacific. This long period of

military presence has yielded one of the most extensive collections of historic architecture in the NPS. Alcatraz Island, the site of pre-Civil War fortifications, was the nation's first military prison; it later became the most notorious maximum security penitentiary in the United States, and subsequently was the site of the occupation that helped ignite the movement for American Indian self determination. Rehabilitation of key buildings and landscapes is ongoing. Fort Point, one of only two remaining intact Third System forts in the United States, represents the culmination of American military technology, architecture, and construction during the first half of the 19th century – the most fundamental of which was the arrangement of guns in multiple tiers.

Cultural Landscapes

There are nine documented cultural landscapes in GGNRA, including rural landscapes and dairy ranches.

Ground-based Visitor Experience

GGNRA hosts more than 17 million visitors per year. Alcatraz Island receives about 1.4 million visitors annually, and Muir Woods receives about 750,000 visitors annually. Trips to GGNRA account for 50 percent of all visits to the 29 national parks in California. Most visits range from 1 hour to a half-day visit. GGNRA changes character throughout the year and some activities are confined to certain periods. Many other activities and attractions are open year round. Because of clear skies, abundant sunshine and more moderate temperatures, fall is a favorite season for visitors to GGNRA.

Visitor Services/Facilities

A variety of visitor services are provided at GGNRA's various units spread across three counties: Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo. The main visitor attractions and facilities are summarized below and shown on Figure 2 (page 10) and Figure 3 (page 11).

- Visitor centers are located at: GGNRA's headquarters at Fort Mason, the Presidio, Crissy Field, Marin Headlands, Alcatraz Island, Pacifica Chamber of Commerce, San Francisco Pier 39, and Muir Woods.
- GGNRA offers two hike-in and two walk-in campgrounds in the Marin Headlands, and one group camp located in the Presidio of San Francisco.
- Marin County (north of Golden Gate Bridge):
    - Marin Headlands: The Marin Headlands consists of numerous visitor attractions and a vast open space easily accessible from the San Francisco Bay Area.
        - Gerbode Valley: Located in the coastal zone of the Marin Headlands, this wilderness backcountry has numerous hiking trails. There are panoramic vista points at several hilltops.
        - Kirby Cove: A steep, mile-long trail leads to a sandy beach with views of the Golden Gate Bridge and northern San Francisco.

Tucked inland, above the beach's cliffs, is the abandoned Battery Kirby, which saw service from 1898 to 1934.

        - Fort Barry: This former 1908 army post encompasses the historic military post as well as several historic batteries. There are coastal trails and panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean, Rodeo Lagoon and Point Bonita.
        - Fort Cronkhite: This former World War II military post stands at the edge of the Pacific Ocean. It includes the fort's barracks, mess halls, supply buildings, and other structures. Fort Cronkhite is also the location of Rodeo Lagoon and Rodeo Beach and several trails.
        - Nike Missile Site: During the tense years from 1953 to 1979, the US Army built and operated a total of 280 Nike missile firing batteries in the United States. These missile sites were emplaced as the last line of defense against Soviet bombers. The site also includes a museum.
        - Tennessee Valley: Numerous hiking, biking, and equestrian trails wind across this scenic valley.
        - Point Bonita Lighthouse: A half-mile, steep trail provides access to this active lighthouse maintained by the US Coast Guard.
    - Fort Baker: This site consists of over 25 historic army buildings clustered around a main parade ground, a sheltered harbor protected by a jetty, a number of historic gun emplacements, and trails and forested areas climbing gently up from San Francisco Bay. It also includes a hands-on children's museum and learning center, the *Bay Area Discovery Museum*; a first-class lodge, *Cavallo Point—the Lodge at the Golden Gate*; an institution dedicated to dialog and action on global environmental issues, the *Institute at the Golden Gate*; as well as the *U.S. Coast Guard Station Golden Gate* and the *Travis Sailing Center*.
    - Muir Woods National Monument: Muir Woods is one of the last remaining ancient coast redwood forests with trees over 1,000 years old. It is a quiet place for viewing a wide array of wildlife and plants. There is a visitor center, café, gift shop and 6 miles of trails.
    - Muir Beach and Muir Beach Overlook: This quiet cove, beach, and lagoon are 3 miles west of Muir Woods. High bluffs border the beach to the north and south; Muir Beach Overlook provides spectacular panoramic views in every direction.
    - Stinson Beach: Stinson Beach facilities include rest rooms, showers, picnic areas, and BBQ grills. A snack bar is available during summer.
- San Francisco County (south of Golden Gate Bridge):
    - Alcatraz Island: the nation's first military prison is accessible via ferry from San Francisco's Pier 33. This is one of the most popular visitor attractions within GGNRA.
    - Fort Mason: One historic military building on the cliff top serves as the NPS and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy headquarters, and

another as a Hostelling International hostel. On the waterfront, old port piers and warehouses have been transformed into the workspaces, theaters, galleries, and event pavilions. The Great Meadow slopes down from upper Fort Mason to the marina, offering grassy hilltops and hollows for picnicking, sunbathing, walking, or sports activities. Views from the meadow include San Francisco's hilly skyline and the Golden Gate Bridge.

- The Presidio of San Francisco: For 218 years, the Presidio served as an army post for three nations. There are numerous sites and buildings reflecting that history. The Presidio contains a historic airfield, forests, beaches, and scenic overlooks. The Presidio also contains 11 miles of hiking trails, sports facilities, including a golf course, bowling alley, tennis courts and athletic fields, and offers scenic views of the Bay Area and historic architecture.
  - Baker Beach: This mile-long beach provides panoramic views of the Golden Gate Bridge, Marin Headlands and Lands End. Picnic tables and restrooms are available.
  - Battery Chamberlin: Battery Chamberlin holds the last 6-inch "disappearing gun" of its type on the west coast. On the first full weekend of each month, you can take part in demonstrations of the gun and visit a small seacoast defense museum at the battery.
  - Crissy Field: Restored in 2001, the tidal marsh, beaches and grassy airfield allow for walking, running, biking or merely contemplating at the shore. The area has expansive views, and visitors can observe water birds and native plants.
  - Crissy Field Center: The center houses a media lab, resource library, arts workshop, science lab, and gathering room. The Beach Hut snack bar is located here. The center is a convening spot and resource for local community organizations, and national and international visiting diplomats, politicians, and educational leaders.
- China Beach: Chinese fishermen anchored their boats in this wind-protected cove and camped on the shore. A picnic area with grills is available.
- Sutro Historic District including Cliff House and Sutro Baths: From the Cliff House walkways and overlooks, you can see the ruins of Sutro Baths.
- Lands End: These wave- and wind-carved headlands west of the Golden Gate connect two popular landmarks: the Cliff House and the Palace of the Legion of Honor. Trails at Lands End offer a cliff-top walk through shadowy cypress, with scenic overlooks, 30-mile views of the coast, and foot access to several shoreline pocket beaches. Picnic areas are available.
- Ocean Beach: Ocean Beach is the widest and longest expanse of sand on San Francisco's shores, extending from the Cliff House *to* Fort

Funston. Ocean Beach is popular for seaside drives, brisk jogs, and sunset walks.

- Fort Funston: This stretch of coastal headlands, sand, and dunes is located south of Ocean Beach. In some places, the dunes reach heights of 200 feet or more. Fort Funston is one of the nation's premiere hang gliding spots.
- Fort Point National Historic Site: From its vantage point overlooking the spectacular Golden Gate, Fort Point protected San Francisco harbor from Confederate and foreign attack during and after the Civil War.

- San Mateo County (south of San Francisco):
  - Milagra Ridge: Military use of this land helped to protect the natural habitat from commercial development. Milagra Ridge is an island ecosystem surrounded by urban development that hosts a surprising number of threatened and endangered species. Hiking trails are available.
  - Mori Point: Mori Point's open bluffs and hills lie at the western end of Mori Ridge, where visitors can stroll through wildflower fields or view dramatic coastline, visible as far north as Point Reyes. Currently, the 105-acre Mori Point area has no official trail system; a lattice of fire
  - Sweeney Ridge: This is a hilly hiking area of ridges and ravines between San Bruno and Pacifica. The ridge's 1,200-foot-high summit, covered with coastal scrub and grassland, slopes down to the bay on one side and to the Pacific Ocean on the other. Park rangers lead a number of Sweeney Ridge walks with special themes.
  - Phleger Estate: This 1,300-acre site was home to the prominent Phleger family starting in the 1930s.
  - Rancho Corral de Tierra: This 4,262-acre parcel has undeveloped expanses of coastal scrub, coastal chaparral and riparian woodland that provide habitat for numerous plants and wildlife, including the federally listed San Bruno elfin butterfly, San Francisco garter snake and California red-legged frog and rare plant species. The headwaters of four major coastal watersheds, Martini, Montara, San Vincente and Denniston Creeks, all have their headwaters within the property.
  - Pedro Point: Pedro Point is a roughly 250-acre headlands parcel at the southern boundary of Pacifica. Offshore of Pedro Point is San Pedro Rock, a 600-foot high, near vertical, sharply toothed rock jutting into the ocean that is an important roosting and/or nesting spot for Brandt's and pelagic cormorants, western and other gull species, and brown pelicans; harbor seals haul-out along the rock's southern shore.
  - San Francisco Watershed Lands Easements: The 23,000 acres of watershed lands are managed by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) as part of the City's drinking water system and include forested hills, coastal scrub, and grasslands surrounding three drinking water reservoirs. GGNRA is responsible for the preservation of

the natural state of the property while permitting "the collection, storage, and transmission of water and protection of water quality for human consumption; outdoor recreation; and other [compatible] uses

Visitor Activities

Visitor activities include touring historic buildings, fortifications and landscapes; hiking on trails and beaches; fishing; exploring tidepools; picnicking; horseback riding; hang gliding; windsurfing; enjoying nature; viewing natural scenery, night skies, and sunsets; experiencing sounds of nature; viewing flora and fauna; interpretive activities and cultural demonstrations; camping; and photography. Visitors can access the many parts of GGNRA by public transportation, car, bicycle, foot and, in some cases, by equestrian trails. GGNRA is different than many other NPS units in that there are multiple contiguous and non-contiguous units in three counties with many developed entrance points with parking areas as well as neighborhood trailheads.

Special Designated Areas

There are no federally-designated wilderness areas within GGNRA. As previously mentioned, GGNRA is part of the United Nations-designated Golden Gate International Biosphere Reserve.

There are several federally-designated marine protected areas within GGNRA. The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) intersects GGNRA's boundary in two locations: one area north of the Golden Gate Bridge and one area south of the Golden Gate Bridge (Figure 2 on page 10 and Figure 3 on page 11). The Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary intersects GGNRA's coastal lands from Slide Ranch north. The purpose of a national marine sanctuary is to promote comprehensive management of their special conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, research, educational, or aesthetic resources.

"The primary objective of a national marine sanctuary is to protect its natural and cultural features while allowing people to use and enjoy the ocean in a sustainable way. Sanctuary waters provide a secure habitat for species close to extinction and protect historically significant shipwrecks and artifacts. Sanctuaries serve as natural classrooms and laboratories for schoolchildren and researchers alike to promote understanding and stewardship of our oceans. They often are cherished recreational spots for sport fishing and diving and support commercial industries such as tourism, fishing and kelp harvesting (NOAA, 2011)".

Four state designated marine protection areas intersect GGNRA's boundary south of the Golden Gate Bridge: Egg Rock to Devil's Slide Special Closure Area, Montara State Marine Reserve (MR), James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve (within Montara State MR), and Pillar Point State Marine Conservation Area. The federally designated Monterey Bay NMS encompasses all of these state designated areas.

The James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve is operated by the San Mateo County Parks Department and is a State Water Quality Protection Area, Area of Special Biological Significance and a newly designated Marine Protected Area. The Egg Rock to Devil's Slide Special Closure Area restricts approaches to an area by water to protect breeding seabirds from disturbance while the marine reserves and conservation areas have specific fishing restrictions.

C. Point Reyes National Seashore

Point Reyes National Seashore (the Seashore) is located along the west coast of Marin County in northern California; approximately 30 miles north of the City of San Francisco (see Figure 4 on page 22). The Seashore was established in 1962 and consists primarily of federal lands. The Seashore encompasses over 71,000 acres, with 80 miles of undeveloped coastline, 33,000 acres of designated wilderness, active ranching, and over 150 miles of hiking trails. Through a memorandum of agreement with GGNRA, the Seashore manages the northern 19,265 acres of GGNRA lands including Bolinas Ridge and portions of the Olema Valley and Tomales Bay located just east of the Point Reyes peninsula.

The Seashore averages over 2 million visitors each year who are drawn to the unique geography of the Point Reyes peninsula, the rich cultural and historic setting, and the dramatic natural environment, which is recognized locally, nationally, and globally as a center of biodiversity. As previously mentioned, the Seashore along with GGNRA, is part of the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve designated by UNESCO as an area of global significance, demonstrating innovative and sustainable approaches to conservation and development.

The purpose of the Seashore is to "save and preserve for purposes of public recreation, benefit, and inspiration, a portion of the diminishing seashore of the United States that remains undeveloped (Public Law 87-657)".

Noise/Soundscape

The variety of natural sounds and the quietness at the Seashore are important aspects of the visitor experience. NPS staff manages the Seashore to preserve the natural soundscape. Natural sounds at the Seashore include ocean waves crashing on the coastline, bird and animal calls, flowing water along a creek, and strong steady winds. Sources of human caused noise in the Seashore include aircraft overflights, car, truck, and motorcycle traffic on roads, equipment and vehicles associated with ranching, fog signals, and noises from visitor activities. Human-caused noises are generally confined to developed areas of the Seashore and the active ranches.

Biological

There are four major ecosystems found within the Seashore:

- Forests

- Intertidal and subtidal zones
- Oceans
- Prairies and grasslands

There are nine broad types of terrestrial vegetation in the Seashore: Bishop Pine forest, Douglas-fir/Coast redwood forests, hardwood forests, riparian woodlands, coastal scrub, coastal grassland, and coastal dunes. Coastal grasslands, Douglas-fir/Coast redwood forests, and coastal scrub comprise approximately 80 percent of the vegetation types in the Seashore. Amongst the rich diversity of vegetation types are over 800 native plants.

The Seashore is home to over 65 species of mammals, 85 species of fish, 29 species of reptiles and amphibians, and breeding habitat for 130 species of birds. Over 480 species of birds, nearly half the bird species of North America, have been spotted in the Seashore. In addition, one of the largest populations of tule elk in California is found in the Seashore. Thousands of aquatic and terrestrial invertebrate species are also found within the Seashore. Elephant seals breed on land at the Seashore and many other species of marine mammals feed and migrate in the waters just offshore that are within the Seashore.

There are 30 federally listed threatened or endangered species in the Seashore comprised of 22 wildlife species and eight plant species. In the past decade, the Seashore has emphasized making improvements to the breeding habitat of two federally-listed threatened species of fish – the coho salmon and the steelhead trout. A monitoring and protection program for federally-listed threatened Western snowy plovers staffed primarily by trained volunteers has been operating on Point Reyes beaches since 1996.

Water Resources

Point Reyes is surrounded by water. To the north, south and west is the Pacific Ocean. Tomales Bay covers half of the eastern boundary of the Seashore while Lagunitas Creek and Olema Creek run parallel to the remaining portion of the eastern Park boundary. At the southern end of the Point Reyes peninsula is Bolinas Lagoon and Bolinas Bay. The largest water body within the Seashore is Drakes Estero, which encompasses approximately 2,000 acres of important estuary habitat. Abbotts Lagoon is a large brackish lagoon along the western edge of the Seashore. Several smaller lakes are also found in the Seashore, these include Mud Lake, Wildcat Lake, Ocean Lake, Crystal Lake, Pelican Lake, and Bass Lake. Numerous creeks such as Glenbrook Creek, Home Ranch Creek, and Muddy Hollow Creek, drain towards the Pacific Ocean and Drakes Estero from the western slope of the Inverness Ridge. On the eastern slope of the ridge, the creeks drain towards Tomales Bay.

Geological and Paleontological Resources

The Seashore sits on the eastern edge of the Pacific tectonic plate, which is slowly moving to the northwest at about 2 inches per year. The San Andreas Fault Zone that traverses through the Olema Valley and Tomales Bay along the eastern edge of the Seashore is where the Pacific plate grinds against the North American plate. It was movement along a section of this fault further south that caused the devastating 1906 Earthquake and moved the Point Reyes peninsula approximately 20 feet.

The tectonic uplifting along the fault has created the steep topography along the Inverness Ridge, which borders Tomales Bay. To the west of the ridge, the topography is characterized by the gradual rolling hills descending to Drakes Estero and the Pacific Ocean. Nearly the entire Point Reyes peninsula is underlain by salinian granite, which is exposed in the areas of Inverness Ridge, Tomales Point, and the Point Reyes Headlands.

There has not been a formal paleontological resource inventory of the Seashore, however, numerous fossils have been found in the Seashore. The oldest fossils found consist of zooplankton, plants and seeds from the Eocene period dating back 34 to 56 million years.

Cultural Resources: Archaeological Resources, Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes

Archaeological Resources

Dating back 5,000 years, the first inhabitants of the area were the Coast Miwok Indians. Cultural resources staff has surveyed much of the area likely to have been used by the Coast Miwok due to the proximity to streams or food sources and other amenities and have recorded 124 archaeological sites to date documenting their life and culture.

Historic Resources

There are nearly 375 historic structures in the Seashore including farm houses, ranch sites, a lighthouse and radio stations; 60 of the structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are 23 cultural landscapes and two historic ranching districts within the Seashore. There are 32 shipwrecks known to have occurred in the coastal waters within the jurisdiction of the Seashore.

Cultural Landscapes

The Point Reyes peninsula is rich in cultural history with numerous sites and landscapes representing the varied inhabitants and uses of the land. Historic farm houses, barns and creameries represent the ranching culture of the area while the lighthouse and radio stations represent maritime culture. Twenty-three cultural landscapes have been identified within the boundaries of the Seashore and 16 cultural landscapes have been defined for the north district of GGNRA administered by the Seashore.

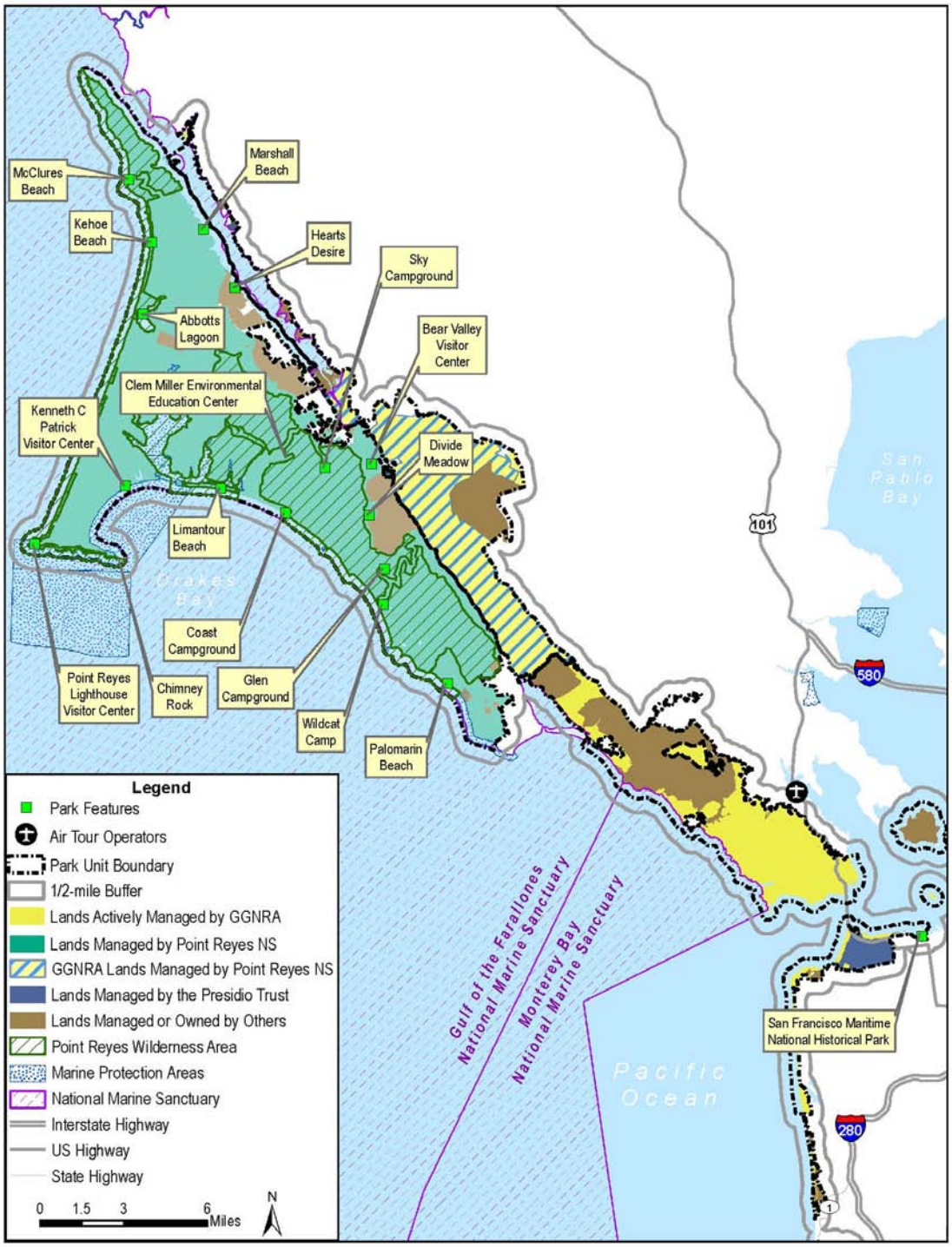

Figure 4. General Features of Point Reyes National Seashore.

Visitor Experience

Over 2 million people visit the Seashore each year. The average visit lasts anywhere from 2 to 6 hours. Peak visitation is during the spring and summer, although there are activities and events year round. Viewing a variety of wildlife, such as elk and whales, exploring the numerous historic sites such as the Point Reyes Lighthouse, and experiencing the natural beauty and varied landscape of the Seashore are the primary activities.

Visitor Services/Facilities

A variety of visitor services are provided within the Seashore. The nonprofit Point Reyes National Seashore Association operates bookstores at three locations: Bear Valley Visitor Center, Point Reyes Lighthouse Visitor Center, and the Kenneth C. Patrick Visitor Center (see Figure 4 on page 22). In addition, the Point Reyes National Seashore Association operates the Clem Miller Environmental Education Center within the Seashore. The Pacific Coast Science and Learning Center has a field station at the Seashore to provide an opportunity for collaboration between scientists and the NPS. The headquarters and visitor center of the off-shore Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, is located at the Bear Valley administrative area of the Seashore. The privately owned Drake's Beach Café is situated next to the Kenneth C. Patrick Visitor Center at Drakes Beach. The Point Reyes Hostel, operated by Hostelling International, provides the only lodging within the boundaries of the Seashore. The hostel is located in the historic Laguna Ranch and offers accommodations for up to 40 guests. There are no other goods or services provided in the Seashore.

There are over 150 miles of trails, four backcountry campgrounds, and two beach campgrounds. The backcountry campsites are accessible only by hiking, biking or horseback while the beach camping is accessible only by kayak or boat. Camping is by permit only.

During the weekends from late December to mid-April, Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is closed to visitor vehicular traffic beyond the South Beach Junction. During this time a shuttle bus is in operation to take visitors from the Kenneth C. Patrick Visitor Center to the Point Reyes Lighthouse and Chimney Rock primarily to watch for migrating whales and to observe the elephant seal colony.

Visitor Activities

Visitor activities include hiking, backpack camping, picnicking, horseback riding, bicycling, kayaking, swimming, surfing, fishing, bird watching, enjoying nature and scenic overlooks, wildlife viewing, plant identification, educational and interpretive activities, cultural demonstrations, field seminars, stewardship programs, and photography. Bolinas Ridge has a hiking and biking trail with bird's-eye views up and down the San Andreas Rift Zone. Olema Valley consists of a rolling landscape of grassland and forest.

Visitor access is by automobile, shuttle bus, foot, bicycle, or horseback. The Seashore has a very active volunteer program tallying around 44,000 hours of volunteer services annually. Volunteers have a wide range of stewardship programs to choose from including monitoring of threatened coho salmon and steelhead, habitat restoration, sampling stream data, monitoring harbor seals, helping to protect snowy plovers and conducting programs for park visitors.

Special Designated Areas

The 1976 Congress created the Point Reyes Wilderness within the national seashore, and estimated the acreage of this new wilderness area as 25,370 acres of designated wilderness and 8,003 acres of potential wilderness (PL 94-544). Subsequent to the legislation, NPS cartographers calculated the actual acreage of the lands and waters designated by Congress as 24,200 acres of wilderness and 8,530 acres of potential wilderness. In 1985 Congress renamed this wilderness area the Phillip Burton Wilderness, in honor of the United States Representative from California for his role in enacting the California Wilderness Act and his strong advocacy for wilderness protection.

All of the Seashore, GGNRA and other public lands in the region are part of the Golden Gate International Biosphere Reserve. The Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and the Seashore share borders along the Seashore's boundary with the Pacific Ocean and Tomales Bay. In addition, the State of California State Water Resources Control Board designated three "Areas of Special Biological Significance" within the Seashore: Tomales Point, Point Reyes Headlands, and Double Point due to biologically unique and sensitive marine ecosystems.

The Marine Life Protection Act of 1999 (Fish and Game Code Sections 2850 – 2863) directed the State of California to create and manage a network of marine protected areas along the coastline to more effectively protect against habitat and species loss. The following areas have been designated as marine protected areas under the Act:

- Drakes Estero State Marine Conservation Management Area
- Point Reyes State Marine Conservation Area and Special Closure Area
- Point Reyes State Marine Reserve Park
- Estero De Limantour State Marine Reserve and Special Closure
- Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area

In addition, there are several other protected areas and special closure areas including, Bird Rock State Water Quality Protection Area, Point Reyes Headlands State Water Quality Protection Area, Point Resistance Rock Special Closure, Double Point State Water Quality Protection Area, Double Point/Stormy Stack Special Closure, and Duxbury Reef State Water Quality Protection Area.

The closure areas restrict the approach to an area by water while the marine reserves and conservation areas have specific fishing restrictions. The State Water Quality Control Board places special restrictions on waste discharge to water within the State Water Quality Protection Areas in conformance with the California Ocean Plan.

D. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (SF Maritime NHP)

The SF Maritime NHP is located in the City of San Francisco, along the shoreline of San Francisco Bay between Fort Mason and the Fisherman's Wharf area (see Figure 3 on page 11). Over 4 million people visit SF Maritime NHP annually for an opportunity to experience and learn about Pacific Coast maritime history, and for expansive views of the San Francisco Bay and Golden Gate Bridge.
The purpose of SF Maritime NHP is to preserve and interpret the history and achievements of seafaring Americans and of the nation's maritime heritage, especially on the Pacific Coast. SF Maritime NHP is to be managed as a museum, dedicated through its collections, programs, and presentations to the maritime history, technology, arts, humanities, and maritime activities of San Francisco Bay and its interaction with the Pacific Coast and worldwide maritime activity. The museum serves three purposes: collection, preservation and interpretation.

The significance of SF Maritime NHP is found in its collection of large vessels, small watercraft, artifacts, art, historic documents, books, and museum objects that are directly associated with the central role played by San Francisco Bay as the preeminent seaport in the maritime heritage of the Pacific Coast of the United States.

SF Maritime NHP includes the Aquatic Park Historic District, Hyde Street Pier and a number of historic vessels ranging from three-masted schooners to steel tug boats dating from 1886 to 1914, including five vessels that are designated as National Historic Landmarks. The Aquatic Park Bathhouse once housed a restaurant and dressing rooms, and its adjacent bleachers provided seating for thousands to view Aquatic Park lagoon and beach. Swimmers from two private swim clubs regularly traverse the lagoon. The visitor center has interpretive exhibits and hands-on displays about San Francisco's seafaring history, and park rangers lead interpretive programs and demonstrations. Some visitors listen to cell-phone audio tours while visiting SF Maritime NHP.

E. Other San Francisco Area National Park Units

In addition, to be inclusive of all SF area national park units, the FAA and NPS are also disseminating this information to the following parks and their respective stakeholder mailing lists in the scoping process: Rosie the Riveter/World War II Homefront National Historical Park, John Muir National Historic Site, Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site, and Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial. These parks are shown on Figure 1 on page 5. No air tour operators

have been granted IOA to operate tours over these other SF area national park units.

Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park

Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park (Home Front Historical Park) is located in the City of Richmond, along the eastern edge of San Francisco Bay approximately 15 miles north of the City of San Francisco (see Figure 3 on page 11). The Home Front Historical Park's purpose is to preserve and interpret the sites, structures, areas, oral histories, and artifacts associated with the industrial, governmental, and citizen efforts that led to victory in World War II. The park's significance is three-fold:

- It preserves an outstanding collection of World War II home front sites, structures, and landscapes.
- It is the place in the national park system dedicated to collecting, preserving, and making accessible to visitors the oral histories, stories, and artifacts of the World War II home front.
- It provides a place in the national park system where visitors link to sites across the country for the purpose of exploring the social and community issues and events that emerged on the American home front during World War II (NPS 2009).

The Home Front Historical Park was dedicated in October 2000 to honor the home front American women who came from all over the United States during World War II to work in the ship yards and factories in support of the war effort. The Historical Park includes sculptures, landscape elements, photographs, and words to relay the stories and history of the women during this historical period. A visitor center is currently under development. The Historical Park is open year round from dawn to dusk.

John Muir National Historic Site

John Muir National Historic Site (John Muir Historic Site) is located in the Alhambra Valley just north of Highway 4 in the City of Martinez, approximately 31 miles northeast of the City of San Francisco (see Figure 3 on page 11). The purpose of John Muir National Historic Site is to preserve and protect John Muir's home and associated environment as a public memorial and to educate the public concerning this significance. Its significance is that it preserves the home site of John Muir during his most productive years as a fruit rancher, writer and a defender of wilderness. It is the place where he crafted his most significant essays and books, still widely read today. Through his writing, lecturing and political involvement, Muir established a new ethic of environmental preservation, calling for the protection of our nation's wilderness and wild places.

Over 34,000 people visited John Muir in 2009. The John Muir Historic Site includes the home where John Muir lived the last 24 years of his life, orchards, the Martinez Adobe, and Mt. Wanda. Visitors to the site can learn about the life

of the man known as the “Father of the National Park Service”. John Muir is responsible for convincing President Theodore Roosevelt to protect Yosemite, Sequoia, Grand Canyon, and Mount Rainier as national parks. Tours of the Muir home and orchards are available, and there is a mile long hike to the top of Mt. Wanda. The John Muir Historic Site is currently open to visitors Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm.

Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site

The Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site (Eugene O’Neill Historic Site) is located on 13 acres in the Town of Danville in Contra Costa County, approximately 30 miles east of the City of San Francisco (see Figure 3 on page 11). The Eugene O’Neill Historic Site’s purpose is to serve as a memorial to Eugene O'Neill, to commemorate O'Neill's contribution to American literature and drama, and to provide a park for the performing arts, and related activities and educational programs.

The significance of Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site begins with the contribution of Eugene O'Neill to American drama. Eugene O'Neill was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1936 and four of his plays are Pulitzer Prize winners. His plays strongly affected American drama and continue to influence theatre internationally today. The seclusion and scenery of the San Ramon Valley appealed to Eugene and Carlotta O'Neill; they had their home, Tao House, built on acreage above Danville. Eugene O’Neill, wrote his best known and final works at Tao House between 1937 and 1944, the place he called his "final harbor." These works include: The Iceman Cometh, Long Day’s Journey into Night, and A Moon for the Misbegotten.

Visitors to the Historic Site arrive by a NPS shuttle bus that picks up visitors in the town of Danville. The 13-acre grounds of the site are also accessible from hiking and mountain biking trails in the surrounding Las Trampas Regional Wilderness. The Eugene O’Neill Historic Site is currently open from Wednesday to Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm with guided tours of the site lasting approximately 2 hours. The Eugene O’Neill Historic Site is free and open year-round. Visitors are required to make advanced reservations from Wednesday through Sunday, except on Saturdays when no reservations are required.

Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial

The Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial (the Memorial) is part of the U.S. Army’s Military Ocean Terminal Concord base located along the Carquinez Straits in Contra Costa County approximately 40 miles northeast of the City of San Francisco (see Figure 2 on page 10). The purpose of the Memorial is to honor the courage and commitment of the 320 sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Merchant Marines, and working civilians killed as they were loading munitions ships bound for the Pacific theatre troops, the largest homeland disaster during World War II. Over 200 of these men were African-Americans, and the Memorial recognizes the critical role they and the survivors

of the explosion played in winning the war in the Pacific. The explosion and its aftermath was one of many catalysts that helped persuade the U.S. Navy and the military establishment to begin the long journey toward racial justice and equality following World War II.

The Memorial is not only about remembering those who lost their lives but also provides an opportunity for visitors to learn about discrimination, segregation and the beginnings of the civil rights for all Americans. The historic events that occurred at Port Chicago resulted in significant changes to the military with President Truman signing Executive Order 9981 calling for the desegregation of the Armed Services.

Since the site is located on an active military installation, all visitors need to be cleared with the U.S. Army, must be US Citizens, and must make reservations at least 2 weeks in advance so clearance can be granted. The average visit lasts approximately 1.5 hours. The primary attractions of the Memorial are the granite monuments to remember those who lost their lives and the various interpretive signs to learn about the disaster at Port Chicago and the changes that it brought about.

F. Commercial Air Tour Activity and Air Tour Visitor Experience

Visitors may gain an aerial perspective on the natural features of GGNRA or the Seashore by taking an air tour flying out of two locations: San Francisco International Airport (KSFO) in San Mateo County approximately six miles south of the San Francisco County boundary and Commodore Center Heliport (KJMC) nearly four miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County (see Figure 5 on page 30).

The tours provide an aerial viewing experience of the natural wonders, geographic diversity, and iconic landmarks of San Francisco and the Bay Area. Views take in the striking skyline and hills of the City. The tours point out the numerous landmarks of the area including the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, Alcatraz Island, Angel Island, the Bayside communities of Sausalito and Tiburon, and the expanse of the Marin Headlands and the Pacific coastline.

In accordance with *NPATMA*, the annual air tour operations over and within a ½-mile outside the boundary of GGNRA were capped at the number of existing operations reported in the operator's application. The FAA has granted IOA at GGNRA to two commercial air tour operators: San Francisco Helicopter Tours and San Francisco Seaplane Tours. These two operators have been granted IOA for a total of 5,090 annual flights. The FAA has also granted IOA of 5,090 annual flights at SF Maritime NHP to these same two operators. An example of the generalized flight tracks for San Francisco Helicopter Tours out of the Commodore Center Heliport is shown on Figure 5 (page 30).

In accordance with *NPATMA*, the annual air tour operations over and within a ½-mile outside the boundary of the Seashore were capped at the number of existing operations reported in the operator's application. The FAA has granted IOA at the Seashore to two commercial air tour operators: San Francisco Helicopter Tours and San Francisco Seaplane Tours. These two operators have been granted IOA for a total of 5,090 annual flights, although they are currently not operating air tours over the Seashore.

As stated earlier, no air tour operators have been granted IOA to operate tours over Rosie the Riveter/World War II Homefront National Historical Park, John Muir National Historic Site, Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site, and Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial.

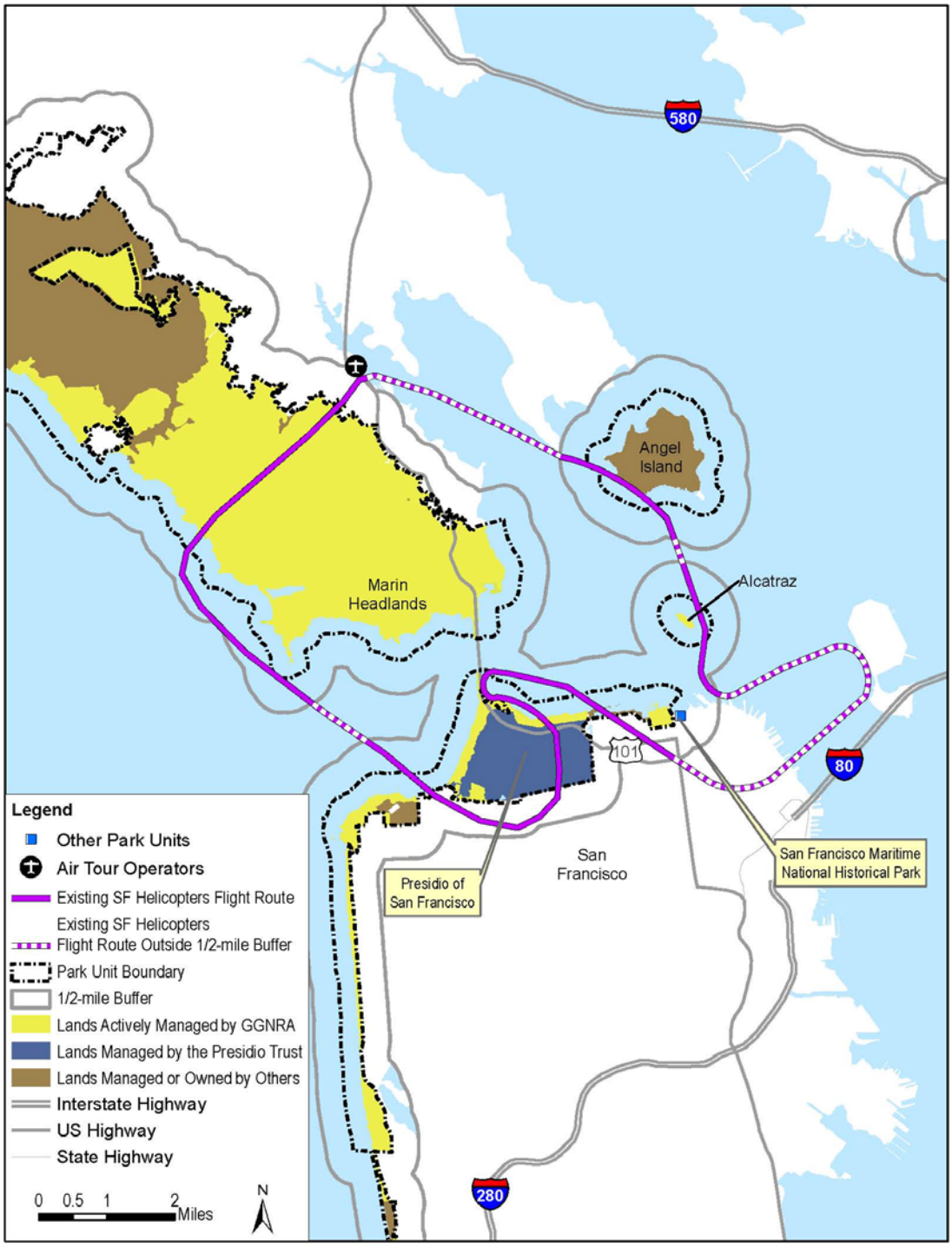

Figure 5. Generalized Flight Tracks for IOA-Allowed Commercial Air Tours in GGNRA.

*********** End Part 2 *************

Part 3: Federal Action and Alternatives

A. Federal Action

The proposed federal action is the establishment of separate ATMPs at GGNRA and the Seashore – in accordance with 14 CFR Part 136. The alternative selection will be based on adequate justification and will include any measures that are necessary to mitigate or prevent significant adverse impacts of commercial air tour operations, if any, on natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences at these individual NPS units.

The ATMP for each individual park will only apply to the airspace below 5,000 feet (ft) AGL (above ground level) over the area encompassed by the park and to the ½-mile buffer zone surrounding the park's boundary. The ATMP applies to all commercial air tour operations in this airspace, unless, for the purposes of safe operation of an aircraft as determined under the rules and regulations of the FAA, the pilot-in-command is required to take action to ensure the safe operation of the aircraft. Aircraft takeoffs and landings also exempt.

The purpose of this project is in compliance with *NPATMA*, which directs the FAA and NPS to establish an ATMP for any national park or tribal lands for which such a plan is not in effect whenever a person applies for authority to conduct a commercial air tour operation over the park. The need to develop ATMPs at GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore, was triggered by statutory language in *NPATMA* that required the development of an ATMP for parks where commercial air tour operators applied for operating authority to conduct operations.

The environmental decision to be made is the selection of one ATMP alternative for GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP, and one ATMP alternative for the Seashore. Appropriate actions will be taken to implement the selected ATMP alternatives at GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP, and the Seashore, in compliance with the existing legislative, regulatory, and policy mandates of both the FAA and NPS.

NPATMA specifies that the ATMP be developed by means of a public process. This scoping process is one of the elements of that public process. Following scoping and following the completion of a comprehensive environmental impact analysis, a preferred alternative will be identified.

B. Alternatives Development

The alternatives are the "heart" of the NEPA process and must meet the *NPATMA* objective to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent the significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations upon the natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences at GGNRA, SF Maritime NHP and the Seashore.

The FAA and NPS have identified general reasonableness criteria that each ATMP alternative should: (1) be safe, (2) satisfy the Purpose and Need, including minimize or prevent significant impacts to park resources and values (3) be technically and economically feasible, and (4) avoid repetition of similar alternatives. As required by NEPA and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, the "No Action Alternative" must also be evaluated. FAA and the NPS have agreed that "no action" for purposes of developing an ATMP is defined as "no change" from current management direction or level of management intensity, as recommended in CEQ Guidance. Examples of other alternatives could include no air tours, unrestricted air tours or varying levels of operations or time of day restrictions.

The No Action Alternative for GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP would be an ATMP that codifies current flight track conditions at the IOA level of annual operations. Figure 5 (page 30) shows existing typical flight tracks and operating altitudes for San Francisco Helicopter Tours over and within ½-mile of GGNRA's boundary, which encompasses SF Maritime NHP. Commercial air tour operations over GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP would be required to comply only with existing applicable FAA Regulations.

The No Action Alternative for the Seashore would be an ATMP that codifies current and existing flight track conditions at the IOA level of annual operations. Commercial air tour operations over the Seashore would be required to comply only with existing applicable FAA Regulations.

In addition to these criteria, the *NPATMA* and implementing regulations in 14 CFR Part 136 state that the ATMP for a park:

- May prohibit commercial air tour operations over and within ½-mile outside the boundary of a national park.
- May establish conditions for the conduct of commercial air tour operations, including, but not limited to, commercial air tour routes, maximum number of flights per unit of time, maximum and minimum altitudes, time of day restrictions, restrictions for particular events, intrusions on privacy on tribal lands, and mitigation of noise, visual, or other impacts.
- Shall apply to all commercial air tour operations over and within ½-mile outside the boundary of a national park.
- Shall include incentives (such as preferred commercial air tour routes and altitudes, relief from caps and curfews) for the adoption of quiet aircraft technology by commercial air tour operators conducting commercial air tour operations at a park.
- Shall provide for the initial allocation of opportunities to conduct commercial air tour operations if the plan includes a limitation on the number of commercial air tour operations for any time period.
- Shall justify and document the need for measures taken pursuant to the items above.

At the conclusion of the scoping process, the FAA and NPS will develop alternatives to be carried forward for evaluation in the Draft EA. The public will have an opportunity to view the alternatives and their analysis when the Draft EA is distributed for public review and comment.

********** **End Part 3** **********

Part 4: References

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********** End Part 4 **********

********** End of Document **********