
GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE STRATEGIC PLAN For Fiscal Years 2001 - 2005

April, 2000

Fiscal Years 2001-2005
Strategic Plan
For
Gulf Islands National Seashore

Approved: _____
Jerry A. Eubanks Date
Superintendent

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval page	i
Table of Contents	ii
Preface	iii
Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)	
About this plan	
National Park Service Mission	1
Introduction	
2	
About the Park	
Gulf Islands National Seashore Mission Statement	3
Purpose	
Significance	
Mission Goals	4
Goal Category I: Preserve Park Resources	
Mission Goal Ia	

Mission Goal Ib
Goal Category II: Provide for Public Enjoyment and
Visitor Experience
Mission Goal IIa
Mission Goal IIb
Goal Category III: Legislated Partnerships
Goal Category IV: Ensure Organizational Effectiveness
Mission Goal IVa
Mission Goal IVb
Long-term Goals 5
List of Long-term Goals
Goals Explanations
How Goals Will Be Accomplished 12
Key External Factors 13
Program Evaluation Methodology and Schedule for Future Evaluations 15
Shareholders 16
Strategic Plan Preparers 16

PREFACE

This Strategic Plan was written to fulfill the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act. Following is a brief overview of that law, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1993.

It should be noted, however, that the Strategic Plan is much more than just a response to legislative mandate. The law was a catalyst that caused the park staff to reexamine its fundamental mission and to take a fresh, longer range view, in concrete terms, of what results or outcomes it needed to achieve to more effectively and efficiently accomplish that mission. It caused us to reexamine the present condition of the natural and cultural resources in our care, the current status of our visitor services, and the existing fiscal, human, and other resources at our command to do our job. It pushed our sights above the usual daily focus on activities and products to take in the bigger picture of where we are and where we need to be. It encouraged us to think and plan in new ways. The effort wasn't easy, was even painful at times. The results, however, will be better planning, better management, and better communication with all of our constituencies and stakeholders, as well as amongst ourselves, about where we are, where we need to be, and how we are going to get there.

Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)

GPRA is one of the most recent and comprehensive of a number of laws and executive orders directing federal agencies to join the "performance management revolution" already embraced by private industry and many local, state, and national governments.

In a nutshell, performance management ensures that daily actions and expenditures of resources are guided by long- and short-term goal setting in pursuit of accomplishing an organization's primary mission, followed by performance measurement and evaluation. Importantly, the goals are quantifiable and measurable results or outcomes, rather than efforts or outputs (activities, services, and products). The established and proven performance management approach is to establish goals – allocate resources to accomplish those goals – take action/do the work – measure results – evaluate and report performance – use evaluation to adjust goals and reallocate resources – and continue the loop. This process sharpens our focus on accomplishing our mission in the most efficient and effective ways, and holds managers and employees accountable on a clear and measurable basis.

The approach seems so elegantly simple and logical that one is compelled to ask, "Isn't that what everyone is already doing?" In fact, **most federal agencies have not traditionally done business this way. They have been funded and conducted their business by activities rather than by goals.** Too often they have conducted business year after year based on what they have always routinely done, rather than in pursuit of mission-oriented goals. **Too often they have not measured their performance in terms of results achieved, but rather in level of activities conducted,** products produced, or services provided – if they have measured performance at all. And too often managers and employees have not been held accountable for their performance in achieving concrete, results-oriented goals, and have not communicated the outcomes of their work to their important constituencies – the American people, the Congress, even the President. So performance management, as embodied in GPRA, is new, revolutionary, and vitally important to a more effective, efficient, and credible federal government.

GPRA requires federal agencies to develop and use three primary documents in conducting their business. These documents are also to be submitted to the Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB):

1. Strategic Plan of no less than five years duration, reviewed and revised every three years, and containing:
 - mission statement based in law, executive order, etc.;
 - long-term goals, which are objective, quantified, and measurable, to accomplish mission;
 - how goals will be accomplished, an adequate explanation including "...operational processes, skills and technology, and the human, capital, information and other resources required to meet those goals...";
 - relationship of annual goals to long term goals, a description of how long term goals are carried out in annual goal increments;
 - key external factors which could positively or negatively affect goal accomplishment; and
 - program evaluation methodology, a description of how mission and goals were arrived at and a schedule for future program evaluations.
 - GPRA also requires consultation with affected and interested parties in the development of the Strategic Plan, and it requires that the plan be
 - developed by federal employees (versus contractors, etc.).
2. Annual Performance Plan tiered off the Strategic Plan each year, showing how long term goals will be accomplished in annual increments, and containing:
 - annual goals to incrementally achieve long-term goals in Strategic Plan;
 - annual work plan, i.e. explanation of how annual goals will be accomplished – "briefly describe the operational processes, skills and technology, and the human, capital, information and other resources required to meet the performance goals...."; and
 - basis for measuring results – "...provide a basis for comparing actual program results with the established performance goals...." and "...describe the means to be used to verify and validate measured values."
3. Annual Performance Report reviewing each year's successes and failures and identifying areas where activities or goals need to be revised in the future, addressing:
 - what annual goals were met or exceeded;
 - what annual goals were not met;
 - why annual goals were not met; and
 - what remedial action will be taken for goals not met.

Importantly, GPRA mandates that long-term and annual goals be results or outcomes rather than outputs (activities, products, or services) and that they be "objective, quantifiable, and measurable" so that performance can be adequately measured and reported, progress on mission accomplishment assessed, and managers and employees held accountable.

While the National Park Service has long been a mission-oriented organization, it has also had a long tradition of planning, managing, and budgeting by activity, problem solving and issue resolution. Its response to GPRA requirements will help it focus on accomplishing mission through establishing long-term and annual goals, allocating resources to those goals, and measuring and reporting results.

About This Plan

In consultation with Congress, OMB and other interested parties, the National Park Service (NPS) developed its own unique GPRA implementation process. Using this process, the NPS methodically developed its first "servicewide" Strategic Plan and submitted it on September 30, 1997. That plan was revised and published electronically on January 15, 2000. A copy of revised plan is available for review at park headquarters. It is also available on the Internet at <http://www.nps.gov>.

The NPS manages the National Park System, which consists of over 375 units located in nearly every state and territory of the nation. Thus the NPS is fundamentally a field-based, resource preservation and visitor service organization, where results or outcomes actually occur in the parks rather than Washington headquarters. In addition, the NPS has legislated partnership responsibilities, carried out by central offices throughout the country, to provide technical assistance and grant funding to other non-federal preservation entities. Therefore, as part of its GPRA implementation process, NPS decided that each of its component parks, programs, and offices would develop and submit their own Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans, and Annual Performance Reports. The National Park Management Omnibus Act of 1998 codified into law that all field units of the National Park System would write Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans consistent with the Government Performance and Results Act. The local plans address the long-term goals in the "servicewide" plan that are appropriate to the individual units as parts of the overall National Park System, NPS, and its mission. Then they add goals specific to their own legislative

mandates, missions, resources, visitor services, and issues needs. The local plans, then, are a blend of national and local missions and goals.

This Strategic Plan for Gulf Islands National Seashore follows this pattern. It is a five-year plan covering fiscal years 2001 through 2005. It consists of a mission statement born out of the NPS organic act as well as the specific legislation establishing this park. It contains mission goals, closely paralleling the "servicewide" mission goals, that illustrate in broad brushstroke what we do far beyond just five years – "in perpetuity" - to accomplish our stated mission. It then contains long-term goals, which target in quantified, measurable ways what we will accomplish in the next five years toward achieving our overall mission goals and mission. The long-term goals address both appropriate "servicewide" goals as well as park-specific outcomes. The goal numbering protocol follows that of the "servicewide" plan with park-specific suffixes. Since not all servicewide goals apply to Gulf Islands National Seashore, some numbers are skipped. In addition, there are numbers containing 0's which are not in the servicewide plan and indicate park-specific goals.

Following the simple goal listing, each long-term goal is repeated with one or more explanatory paragraphs that give background, detail, and other information useful to help the reader understand the goal as well as to sketch in how the goal will be accomplished.

After these goal explanations, the plan contains a general section on "How Goals will be Accomplished" which briefly sketches the park's organization, staffing, fiscal, infrastructure, and other resources available to achieve the plan's long-term goals. This is followed in turn by brief discussion of "Key External" factors over which park staff may have influence but not control, and which could positively or negatively affect goal achievement.

Finally, there is a brief discussion of how the contents of the plan were arrived at, and a listing of those who were consulted in the development of the plan.

It should be noted that the goals in this plan are generally predicated on "flat budgets" for the next five years. Other than increases for inflation, we assumed no major increases in funding. Where increases in appropriations were known or are likely, they were taken into account. Where other funding sources (donations, fee revenues, etc.) were "reasonably assured", they too were taken into consideration when setting performance targets. Obviously, limits on funding constrain what can be accomplished toward our goals and mission. GPRA, however, is distinctly not about discussing budget shortfalls or requesting or justifying additional funding. Rather it is about planning, managing, and communicating what we can accomplish with what we already have. Performance target numbers speak for themselves about how well funded we are to accomplish our mission, and where targets are low, additional budget discussions might be generated. But this is not the primary purpose of the plan.

We would, however, be remiss in our duties as stewards of and storytellers about the priceless natural and cultural resources - defining America's heritage - which are in our care if we did not duly note that we sincerely believe we are under-funded and under-staffed to fully achieve our important mission and goals. On the other hand, we also recognize that we are but one of many worthwhile federal enterprises which compete for scarce and precious tax dollars, and we are pursuing a wide variety of alternative management, funding, and staffing scenarios to supplement our appropriations. In the meantime, we welcome the opportunity to respond to the requirements of GPRA with this Strategic Plan and its companion documents to better plan, manage, and communicate how - and how well - we are achieving our mission through performance goals supported by existing, and largely flat, levels of funding.

Each year that the Strategic Plan is in effect, beginning with fiscal year 2001 (October, 2000) there will be a companion Annual Performance Plan which shows in annual goals, that year's targeted incremental achievement of each long-term goal, and a work plan for accomplishing that increment. Each year there will also be an Annual Performance Report discussing actual achievement of the prior year's annual goals and progress on long-term goals. Additional copies of the Gulf Islands National Seashore Strategic Plan are available at park headquarters at 1801 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Gulf Breeze, Florida 32561. Questions and comments are welcome and can be addressed to the Superintendent at the above address. As they are written and approved, copies of the current year's Annual Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report will also be available on request, with questions and comments equally welcome.

The Mission of the National Park Service

“The National Park Service is dedicated to conserving unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations. The Service is also responsible for managing a great variety of national and international programs designed to help extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and world.”

-National Leadership Council

INTRODUCTION

About the Park

This five-year Strategic Plan has been written for Gulf Islands National Seashore, one of 379 units of the greater National Park System administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The National Park Service was created by Congress in 1916 to promote and regulate the use of a system of federal parks “which purpose is to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for future generations” (NPS organic act, 16 USC 1.)

The National Park System preserves outstanding representatives of the best of America’s natural, cultural, and recreational resources of national significance. These resources constitute a significant part of America’s heritage, character, and future. Along with similar resources of local, state, tribal, and national significance administered by other public and private organizations and supported by National Park Service technical assistance and grant funding support, Gulf Islands National Seashore is a vital part of America’s national system of parks and other preserved resources. The National Park Service not only directly and indirectly preserves these myriad national treasures, it also makes them available to millions of visitors from throughout the country and the world every year.

Gulf Islands National Seashore, Florida and Mississippi, was authorized by Act of Congress, Public Law 91-660, January 8, 1971, to provide for recognition of certain historic values such as coastal fortifications and other purposes such as the preservation and enjoyment of undeveloped barrier islands and beaches. The National Park Service assumed management of the area in May, 1972. The most significant cultural resources include Forts Pickens and Barrancas, Advanced Redoubt of Fort Barrancas, Naval Live Oaks in Florida and Fort Massachusetts in Mississippi. The most significant natural resources are the barrier islands of Santa Rosa and Perdido Key in Florida and Petit Bois, Horn and Ship in Mississippi along with their surrounding waters. The boundaries contain 137,597 acres of which 16,759 acres are dry land areas.

The largest portion of the visitation is from within a 500-mile radius and includes the states of Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas. Since the Seashore is the nearest salt water beach to most of the nation's midsection, recreational beach use is the primary objective of most visitors. Significant numbers, nevertheless, visit the Seashore to see and tour the cultural and historic features. Gulf Islands is the most heavily visited seashore in the National Park System, and one of the 10 most heavily visited National Park areas. Most of the Seashore is open at night and is, therefore, vulnerable to illegal and unwarranted activities.

The National Seashore's mandate to preserve the natural environment cannot be adequately fulfilled without a comprehensive knowledge of the resources, an assessment of baseline condition and threats, and an understanding of the processes and parameters which influence these systems. Significant deficiencies exist in the knowledge and information necessary for effective natural resource management.

The Seashore contains a wide variety of historic structures in varied states of repair and with varying needs for preservation. A plan is needed to establish priorities for these preservation needs and determine which areas are in need of work and what the nature of that work should be.

GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE MISSION STATEMENT

Gulf Islands National Seashore preserves certain outstanding natural, cultural and recreational resources along the Northern Gulf Coast of Florida and Mississippi. These include several coastal defense forts spanning more than two centuries of military activity, prehistoric archeological sites, pristine examples of intact Mississippi coastal barrier islands, salt marshes, bayous and submerged grass beds, complex terrestrial communities, emerald green water and white sand beaches.

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of Gulf Islands National Seashore is to preserve and interpret its Gulf Coast Barrier Islands ecosystem and its system of coastal defense fortifications, while providing for the public use and enjoyment of these resources.

Significance Statements:

- Nationally significant historical coastal defense forts representing a continuum of development;
- Several mostly undisturbed, natural areas in close proximity to major population centers;
- Areas of natural significant high quality beaches, dunes and water resources;
- Endangered species occur in several areas;
- Contains regionally important archeological sites (prehistoric in context);
- Provides outstanding controlled areas conducive to the successful reintroduction of native threatened and endangered species;
- Provides habitat for early life stages of many coastal and marine flora and fauna of commercial and recreational importance;
- Provides a benchmark to compare environmental conditions in developed areas of the Gulf Coast.

MISSION GOALS

Gulf Islands National Seashore's mission is accomplished through pursuit of the following broad, "in perpetuity" mission goals:

Goal Category I: Preserve Gulf Islands National Seashore Resources

Ia. Natural and cultural resources and associated values of the Seashore are protected, restored, and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.

Ib. The National Park Service at Gulf Islands National Seashore contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

Goal Category II : Provide for the Public Use and Enjoyment and Visitor Experience of Gulf Islands National Seashore.

Ila. Visitors to Gulf Islands National Seashore safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

Ilb. Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of Gulf Islands National Seashore and its resources for this and future generations.

Goal Category III : Strengthen and Preserve Natural and Cultural Resources and Enhance Recreational Opportunities Managed by Partners

This mission goal refers primarily to the legislated NPS partnership programs and is accomplished by central offices rather than parks.

Goal Category IV: Ensure Organizational Effectiveness of Gulf Islands National Seashore

IVa. The National Park Service at Gulf Islands National Seashore uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

IVb. The National Park Service at Gulf Islands National Seashore increases its managerial capabilities through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations, and individuals.

LONG-TERM GOALS

During the next five years – fiscal years 2001 through 2005 – the National Park Service will achieve the following specific long-term goals in pursuit of its mission and mission goals at Gulf Islands National Seashore. These long-term goals are objective, quantified, and measurable. Due dates, performance indicators, performance target numbers, desired condition, and baselines, as appropriate, are imbedded in each goal statement in order to avoid separate long lists of performance measures. Each long-term goal is listed in the context of the mission goal it is targeting to achieve. The complete listing of servicewide goals may be found at www.nps.gov/planning/sp.

Gulf Islands National Seashore Long Term Goals:

GOAL CATEGORY I: PRESERVE PARK RESOURCES

MISSION GOAL Ia: Natural and cultural resources and associated values of Gulf Islands National Seashore are protected, restored, and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.

Long-term goals:

Ia1B: By September 30, 2005, exotic vegetation on 100 (50%) of 200 targeted acres of Gulf Islands National Seashore lands, as of FY1999, is contained.

Parklands, where natural processes have been significantly altered by past use practices, need to be restored to their natural condition. Impacts from such land use practices directly affect natural resources and can result in severe and persistent changes to habitat conditions and ecosystem functions. This goal will be met by removal of cogon grass, rattle bush and the Chinese tallow tree.

Ia2A T&E Species Improved: By September 30, 2005, 1 (12.5%) of 8 of the FY1999 federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitat on Seashore lands requiring National Park Service recovery actions have improved status.

-AND-

Ia2B T&E Species Stable: By September 30, 2005, 4 (50%) of 8 of Gulf Islands National Seashore's identified populations of federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitat on park lands and/or requiring NPS recovery actions, as of 1999, maintain a stable status.

The National Park Service is obligated under the NPS Organic Act and Endangered Species Act to take affirmative actions to ensure the conservation of listed species found within the Parks. Efforts will be taken to improve and preserve habitat, remove non-native predators, increase population monitoring activities, eliminate visitor impacts, and increase conservation partnerships.

Ia4 Water Quality: By September 30, 2005, Gulf Islands National Seashore has unimpaired water quality.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303 and Environmental Protection Agency Regulations (40 CFR section 130.7) require States to develop and publish a listing of all waters that do not fully support existing or designated beneficial uses, such as recreation or aquatic life support, if pollution controls or best management practices are not stringent enough to attain any standard that is protective of the uses. Gulf Islands National Seashore will monitor, preserve, protect, and maintain surface water quality and mitigate impacts affecting water quality.

Ia5 Historic Structures: By September 30, 2005, 46 (75%) of 62 of Gulf Islands National Seashore historic structures listed on the FY1999 National Park Service List of Classified Structures (LCS) are in good condition.

Maintaining historic structures in good condition responds to the NPS Organic Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the cultural resource integrity of the National Park Service. The List of Classified Structures (LCS) is the primary computerized database containing information (including condition) of the park historic and prehistoric structures. Efforts will be made to expand preservation maintenance and/or repair or rehabilitation of historic structures. Additional preservation needs will be identified.

Ia6 Museum Collections: By September 30, 2005, 475 (89%) of 532 preservation and protection standards for Gulf Islands National Seashore's museum collections are met.

The preservation and protection of museum collections is essential to the NPS Mission. The environment, security and fire protection conditions necessary to preserve and protect museum objects are identified in the NPS Checklist for Preservation and Protection of Museum Collections. Efforts will be made to ensure that professional standards have been applied to the preservation and storage of the museum collection.

Ia8 Archeological Sites: By September 30, 2005, 98 (75%) of 131 of Gulf Islands National Seashore archeological sites listed on the FY1999 National Park Service Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS), with condition assessments, are in good condition.

Archeological sites and their condition are the responsibility of the NPS. Condition assessments should be performed, documented, and periodically updated. The Seashore will perform annual surveys of known archeological sites.

MISSION GOAL Ib: The National Park Service at Gulf Islands National Seashore contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and their associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

Long-Term Goals:

Ib3 Vital Signs: By September 30, 2005, Gulf Islands National Seashore has identified its vital signs for natural resource monitoring.

Vital signs are indicators of the key ecological processes which, collectively, capture the function of a health ecosystem. The hallmark of vital signs monitoring is the focus on ecosystems, rather than populations of physicochemical parameters. Identifying vital signs of the park ecosystem and the well being of other resources of special concern is the first step in tracking the status and trends of NPS natural resources. The Seashore will identify its significant natural resources.

Ib04 Geological Resources: By September 30, 2005, 1 (100%) of 1 geological processes of special concern at Gulf Islands National Seashore are actively studied and monitored for needed protection, mitigation, etc.

Rates of geologic change are key environmental indicators, which collectively, with other vital signs, can be used to gauge the function of health ecosystems. Shoreline movement will be monitored and information will be developed through utilization of GPS along the Seashore's Mississippi District shoreline.

GOAL CATEGORY II: PROVIDE FOR THE PUBLIC ENJOYMENT AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE OF GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE.

MISSION GOAL IIa: Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, Services, and appropriate recreational opportunities at Gulf Islands National Seashore.

Long-term goals:

Ila1 Visitor Satisfaction: By September 30, 2005, 95% of visitors to Gulf Islands National Seashore are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.

Enjoyment of the seashore and its resources is a fundamental part of the visitor experience. Visitor enjoyment and safety are affected by the quality of park facilities and services. Seashore facilities and services include campgrounds, roads, trails, and water systems, interpretive walks and talks, and crime prevention. NPS visitor evaluations of Park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities are important and useful in improving visitor services. Feedback about facilities, services, and programs currently comes from visitor surveys and other techniques such as focus groups. In addition, the Seashore will continue to improve visitor services based upon customer comment and input and through management innovations and technology.

Ila2 Visitor Safety: By September 30, 2005, the visitor accident/incident rate at Gulf Islands National Seashore is reduced from the FY1992-FY1996 five-year annual average of 2.16 to 1.82 per 100,000 visitor days (16 % decrease).

The National Seashore will explore reducing visitor accidents in two categories: motor vehicle and boating accidents. The vast percentage of motor vehicle accidents can be contributed to two factors: excessive speed and alcohol. Boating accidents seem to be a direct result of negligent operations in conjunction with alcohol. The

Seashore will develop a multi-faceted strategy to reduce accidents by 10%. In conjunction with state and local law enforcement agencies, the park will develop aggressive enforcement and educational outreach programs.

MISSION GOAL IIb: Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of Gulf Islands National Seashore and its resources for this and future generations.

Long-term goals:

IIb1 Visitor Understanding: By September 30, 2005, 86% of Gulf Islands National Seashore visitors understand the significance of the park.

Visitors' park experiences grow from enjoying the Seashore and its resources to understanding why the Seashore exists and the significance of its resources. Information, orientation, interpretation and education are Seashore activities that help visitors discover the most significant meanings to them in the Seashore, and make connections between tangible natural and cultural resources and the intangible values which reside within them.

A National Park Service baseline that will give a stronger indication of the percentage of visitors who actually learn and benefit from visitor services is being developed. Other methods the Seashore uses include a customer evaluation card, visitor center register with comment column, and the annual interpretive program report. An annual goal to prepare a grant proposal to identify ways of testing visitors and school children has been identified at the Seashore.

IIb1X Educational Programs: By September 30, 2005, 75% of 100 participants in Gulf Islands National Seashore formal educational programs understand America's cultural and natural heritage preserved by the National Park Service and its programs.

This goal will measure the gain in understanding of students participating in curriculum-based educational programs offered by Gulf Islands National Seashore. These educational programs link park themes to national standards and state curriculum and involve educators in planning and development. These programs usually include pre-visit and post-visit materials, address different learning styles, include an evaluation mechanism and provide learning experiences linked directly to clear objectives.

GOAL CATEGORY IV: ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE

Mission Goal IVa: The National Park Service at Gulf Islands National Seashore uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

Long-term goals:

IVa3A Workforce Development and Performance - Employee Performance Standards: By September 30, 2005, 100% of Gulf Islands National Seashore permanent and term employee performance agreements are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and position competencies.

Every Seashore employee has a required performance plan and is rated annually on the achievement of its critical results. Traditionally, such performance plans have been task statements emphasizing individual outputs rather than how the employee contributes to the overall Seashore mission. This goal seeks to relate employee performance to the organization by directly tying individual performance goals to organizational outcomes.

IVa4A Workforce Diversity-Permanent Women and Minorities: By September 30, 2005, the number of Gulf Islands National Seashore permanent positions in targeted occupational series filled by employees from underrepresented groups is increased from 6 at end of FY1999 to 8 (25% increase).

IVa4B Workforce Diversity-Temporary/Seasonal Women and Minorities: By September 30, 2005, the total number of Gulf Islands National Seashore temporary/seasonal positions annually filled by women and minorities is increased from 4 in FY1999 to 5 (20% increase).

IVa4C Workforce Diversity – Permanent Employees with Disabilities: By September 30, 2005, the number of Gulf Islands National Seashore permanent positions filled by employees with disabilities is increased from 9 in FY99 to 10 (10% increase).

IVa4D Workforce Diversity – Temporary/Seasonal Employees with Disabilities: By September 30, 2005, the number of Gulf Islands National Seashore temporary/seasonal positions annually filled by employees with disabilities is maintained at the FY99 level of 2.

The National Park Service workforce does not reflect the diversity of minorities women, and individuals with disabilities identified in civilian labor force figures in certain occupational series. Gulf Islands National Seashore is committed to increasing diversity in its workforce and will recruit and hire qualified women, minorities and individuals with disabilities in all occupational series, but particularly in those targeted occupations and grade levels where they are underrepresented to achieve consistency with their percentages of representation in the civilian labor force. The Seashore will also strive to improve diversity in the filling of temporary and seasonal positions by utilizing the student temporary employment program.

IVa5 Employee Housing: By September 30, 2005, the number of Gulf Islands National Seashore employee housing units listed in poor or fair condition is reduced from 2 in FY1997 assessments to 1 (50% reduction).

Housing is provided so that the park's resources and visitors are better protected. The National Park Service has historically provided employee housing in remote locations or other places where it is beneficial to the government. The Seashore has provided a number of government housing units, especially for Law Enforcement personnel, in the Fort Pickens Historic District, Davis Bayou and on Ship and Horn Islands in the Mississippi District. The purpose of this housing has been to provide employee housing in remote areas and to provide for quick response for emergencies as well as for the protection of park properties. The Seashore has completed an inventory of housing conditions and is dedicated to continuing to provide housing to employees that is in good or better condition.

IVa6A Employee Safety – Lost-time Injury Rate: By September 30, 2005, the Gulf Islands National Seashore employee lost-time injury rate is reduced from the FY1992-FY1996 five-year annual average of 6.33 to 4.75 (25% reduction).

As with most Federal and private sector organizations, the growing cost of workers' compensation payments is a major concern for the Seashore. The Seashore will seek to achieve this goal by providing increased safety training and awareness.

IVa6B Employee Safety – Continuation of Pay: By September 30, 2005, the number of Gulf Islands National Seashore hours of hours of Continuation of Pay (COP) will be at or below 200.

Continuation of Pay (COP) hours are the result of employees missing work due to the job injuries or illnesses and are coded as COP on the timekeeping records. Gulf Islands National Seashore will seek to reduce this average by returning employees to light duty as soon as possible and by increased safety training and awareness.

IVa7 Line-Item Construction: By September 30, 2005, 100% of Gulf Islands National Seashore line-item projects funded by September 30, 1998, and each successive fiscal year, meet 90% of cost, schedule, and construction parameters.

The line-item construction program covers historic preservation, rehabilitation, and new construction projects authorized by Congress. This goal measures the percent of line-item construction projects that are completed within allocated funds, project schedule and specific project parameters. The Seashore will utilize project management methods to monitor spending and ensure projects are managed within required limitations.

Mission Goal IVb: The National Park Service at Gulf Islands National Seashore increases its managerial capabilities through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations, and individuals.

IVb1 Volunteer Hours: By September 30, 2005, the number of Gulf Island National Seashore volunteers hours is increased from 40,569 in FY 1997 to 50,711 (25% increase).

The National Park Service Volunteers in the Parks program, authorized in 1970, allows the Service to accept and use voluntary services in ways mutually beneficial to the park and the volunteer. Seashore volunteers provide diverse kinds of assistance including maintenance, visitor information, campgrounds and interpretation. This goal is based on continuing to use this valuable program and striving to keep the visitor centers open and campgrounds well staffed and identifying other volunteer opportunities.

IVb2A Cash Donations and Grants: By September 30, 2005, cash donations to Gulf Islands National Seashore are increased from \$1,100 in 1998 to \$1,140 (3.6%).

This goal tracks the amount of cash donations and cash grants received from all sources. All cash donations are tracked and reported through the finance system. Over the years the Seashore has developed several partnerships with cooperating associations, the National Park Foundation, universities, and individuals that have benefited the Park. This goal will enhance the Seashore's ability to protect and manage the resources.

IVb2B Cash Value of In-kind Donations: By September 30, 2005, the cash value of in-kind donations, grants, and services provided Gulf Islands National Seashore by the Friends of Gulf Islands National Seashore and other organizations is increased from \$0 in FY97 to \$500,000.

This goal tracks the dollar amount of support received by the Seashore in donations and grants from the National Park Foundation and friends groups. The Park will ensure that the Friends group is aware of projects and needs within the Seashore and will foster continued cooperation with Friends and other organizations.

IVb2C Cash Value of In-kind Donations from Eastern National: By September 30, 2005, the cash value of in-kind donations, grants and services to Gulf Islands National Seashore from Eastern National is increased from \$13,900 to \$16,680 (20%).

This goal tracks the value of donations received from cooperating associations.

IVb4 Fee Receipts: By September 30, 2005, the Gulf Islands National Seashore receipts from park entrance, recreation, and other fees are increased from \$717,715 in FY1997 to \$947,384 (32% increase).

This goal reports the amount of receipts from all fee sources. The Seashore will strive to keep entrance stations open during all designated times and work with the national campground reservation system as well as with internal fee

collection activities to ensure that internal processes are managed and that all appropriate user fees are collected and accounted for.

HOW GOALS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED

Gulf Islands National Seashore's long-term goals will be accomplished in five annual increments detailed each year in an Annual Performance Plan. The Annual Performance Plan will contain annual goal increments of the long-term goals. It will also contain a work plan for each annual goal, which will lay out the activities and products, along with their personnel and fiscal costs that will be carried out to achieve the annual goal.

Following the overview below, five-year summary forms illustrate how annual goals and work efforts will accomplish each long-term goal.

Current human and fiscal resources available to achieve the park's goals and carry out its mission include an annual base operating budget of approximately \$5.4 million and FTE of 100 positions. This work force is supplemented by many thousand hours of Volunteers-in-Parks service. The park's annual ONPS budget is supplemented each year by donated funds and fluctuating amounts of special project funds from various sources.

Achieving and/or exceeding performance targets in annual and long-term goals is sometimes dependent on the availability of special project funds and assistance from Regional Support Offices, Southeast Archeological and Conservation Center, and other National Park Service support organizations, as well as partners and cooperators. One such typical partner is Eastern National, which sells interpretive literature in the park visitor center and donates the portion of the proceeds back to support park educational and resource management goals.

A superintendent leads Park staff. The staff is organized into five operating divisions: Resource Management, Interpretation, Visitor Protection, Maintenance, and Administration. This recurring staff is occasionally supplemented and/or supported using special project funds, contracts, and/or the assistance or expertise of various NPS and other organizations as available.

In addition to the following five-year charts, please see the explanatory paragraphs following each goal in the "Long-term Goals" section for more information and/or detail on how goals will be accomplished.

KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

While park management and staff can plan, manage, and largely control much of what occurs in the park, other things they can only influence, especially things external to park boundaries. Some things, such as natural events, they have no control over whatsoever. In developing Gulf Islands National Seashore's Strategic Plan and its long-term goals, it was important to take into consideration key external factors that could negatively or positively affect goal outcomes. A few of the most important or most likely are identified briefly below. This is by no means an exhaustive list but simply those that are most likely to influence outcomes as viewed at the time of writing the plan. As it is now constituted and functioning, Gulf Islands National Seashore is fulfilling, to a major degree, the basic purposes for which it was authorized by P.L. 91-660. However, there are areas of concern that should be addressed in order to ensure that the Seashore will be able to continue in, or perhaps improve on this situation. Since these issues are so diverse and are subject to such a variety of internal, external, and budgetary influences, no attempt has been made here to indicate any particular order of importance.

Land Acquisition

Highly significant tracts of land on Horn Island remain in private ownership, presenting the continuing possibility of some type of development or use in conflict with the wilderness character of the island. Although the Seashore's approved Land Protection Plan calls for purchase of fee simple title to these tracts, action can not proceed until statutory ceiling for land acquisition is increased.

Urban Encroachment

The Seashore's mission of preserving areas for their natural, cultural, and recreational values cannot be carried out independent of what is taking place on adjacent or nearby lands. As these lands are developed, the potential for direct or indirect effects on lands and waters within the Seashore becomes more significant. Participation in the planning activities of State and local agencies must be maintained by the National Park Service as provided for in the authorizing legislation. There is, however, a basic incompatibility if the areas within our boundaries are to remain as free as possible from adverse outside influences.

Shipping Channels

The maintenance of the shipping channels that pass through Gulf Islands is specifically between maintenance of channels in static locations and the dynamic nature of barrier islands. Each has a potential adverse effect on the other. Nevertheless, through cooperation between the Corps and the National Park Service, both must be preserved

to the fullest extent possible. In addition to the necessary dredging activities, concern must also be focused on the manner in which the dredged material is disposed of. Spoil deposition can have either positive or negative effects on National Seashore resources and coordination is essential.

Oil and Gas

The Gulf Coast region has, in recent years, been the subject of intense interest over proved or potential resources of oil and gas. Activities involving exploration, extraction, and transportation of these minerals are of major concern in the management of Gulf Islands. Impacts can result from activities dealing not only with oil and gas beneath those National Park Service lands where the mineral rights are in other than Federal ownership.

Transportation

The surrounding lands to the Seashore are developing rapidly. As a consequence the population expands, tourism strengthens, and the traffic influx increases the demands for accommodating space. The demands of the traffic flow into the Seashore areas, specifically the Florida units, cannot be met through existing Seashore parking facilities. Environmental and resource impacts place many constraints on construction of additional parking areas. The 1978 Transportation Study stated that the private automobile was considered an undesirable mode for increasing access to the Seashore. Management plans and studies portray that a passenger ferry service linking the Florida areas of the Seashore is the first most viable alternative to reduce further automobile infiltration to these areas.

PROGRAM EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE EVALUATIONS

Development of Gulf Islands National Seashores Strategic Plan was accomplished through several different means. Listed below are these steps:

- The staff went through NPS GPRA training as a management team.
- Formulated a park GPRA planning team consisting of the Superintendent and management team and involved other levels of park staff.
- Appointed a park GPRA Coordinator to facilitate planning team efforts, to maintain liaison with Regional GPRA Coordinator, and to write final plan drafts.
- As park management team, applied NPS 8 Step Implementation Process to park GPRA planning.
- Reviewed park legislation, past history, current situation.
- Reviewed NPS servicewide Strategic Plan.
- Developed park mission statement and mission goals based on legislation, etc.
- Reviewed existing planning documents, particularly the most recent and used. Reviewed current internal and external situation.
- Consulted with interested and affected parties – and/or included them in the planning process.
- As a management team determined the most important needs and developed five-year, long-term outcome goals to accomplish mission and mission goals.
- Reviewed current status of resources and visitor services, current fiscal and human resources, current and potential external factors, etc. to do a reality check on whether long-term goals and performance targets were realistic, and adjusted as necessary.
- Laid each long-term goal out in five annual increments to determine necessary annual outcomes, funding and staffing needed to reach five year performance target.
- Developed and wrote the final plan. Superintendent and staff reviewed final draft. Superintendent approved the plan. Submitted copies to NPS Office of Strategic Planning, and Southeast Region Office.

Regarding schedule for future evaluations, for most parks the plan will be reviewed annually and potential minor adjustments made based on annual performance achievement the prior year. The plan will certainly be reviewed and revised at least every three years as required by GPRA. It will likely be revised earlier or more frequently than that in its first iteration, however, probably during fiscal year 2002 or 2003. All reviews and revisions will follow the same pattern as outlined above. As the performance management process is better understood and becomes more routine, as thinking in performance management terms becomes the norm, GPRA strategic planning will become easier and better, and fewer reviews and revisions should be necessary.

SHAREHOLDERS

This plan will be mailed to the following park shareholders who attended and contributed to the parks' Management by Objectives workshop in 1993:

- Dan Allen, Ecologist, Chevron U.S.A., Inc., New Orleans, Louisiana
- Peter Dohms, Former Gulf Islands Advisory Commission Member and Environmental Geologist, Condor Earth Technologies, Inc.
- Sandi Fury, Environmental Representative, Chevron, U.S.A., Inc., New Orleans, Louisiana
- Libby Graves, Gulf Islands Conservancy, Gulfport, Mississippi
- Thomas McIllwain, National Marine Fisheries, Pascagoula, Mississippi
- Rick McWhite, Chief of Natural Resources, Eglin Air Force Base, Niceville, Florida
- Muriel Wagner, Conservationist, Former Escambia County Commissioner, Pensacola, Florida

And to the Friends of Gulf Islands National Seashore

STRATEGIC PLAN PREPARERS

The following park staff members were intimately and extensively involved in preparing this strategic plan:

- Jerry Eubanks, Superintendent
- Nina Kelson, Program Manager
- Gail Bishop, Chief of Interpretation
- Bob Greer, Chief, Maintenance
- Hank Snyder, Chief of Resources Management
- J.R. Tomasovic, Chief, Resource Management and Visitor Protection
- Dan Verones, Acting Chief of Administration