

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

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Dry Tortugas National Park

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: DRT0

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

President Franklin Roosevelt set aside Fort Jefferson and the surrounding waters as a national monument in 1935. The area was redesignated as Dry Tortugas National Park in 1992 to protect both the historic and natural features. In 2007 the National Park Service and State of Florida cooperated to ensure the unique marine resources of this park are protected for future generations through adopting a no-take and no-fishing zone.

The strikingly beautiful underwater marine resources and special historical structures of this park contribute to its overall uniqueness. It is a destination park that is often a once in a lifetime trip for many who arrive on the shores of Garden Key. Located 68 miles west of Key West DRT0 is remote and somewhat difficult to access. This natural isolation has helped maintain the unique cultural landscape but also presents unusual challenges to maintenance, staffing, visitor access, and overall management. Transportation to the park takes anywhere from one to three hours either by boat or seaplane. All personal needs for visitors and staff must be brought in by boat or plane and removed the same way. Every day necessities of modern life are often luxuries for those at Garden Key in the Dry Tortugas National Park, making it an experience that doesn't include cellphones, blackberries, etc but does include an opportunity to see the most spectacular night sky .

This park's fragile cultural and natural resources have been impacted by weather events and visitors over the years. It is home to Fort Jefferson, the largest 19th century American masonry coastal fort (1840s) in addition to the Loggerhead Key lighthouse. The Centennial vision for DRT0 begins with implementing the recently adopted Research Natural Area (RNA) with improved aids to navigation and interpretive programs to help visitors understand the resources and complete the science monitoring plan that will track the changes to the resource under the new protections.. The park will also preserve the historic and cultural resources here by completing refurbishment and stabilization of the fort walls and rodman cannons that are still in place.

Beyond the infrastrucutre needs, the Centennial Vision for DRT0 recognizes that the future of this park requires that we develop and implement strategies that will meet the needs of a changing population. Reengaging young people in our national parks is critical to keep these special places for future generations. In celebration of the Centennial Challenge this park commits to incorporating cutting edge technologies into education and outreach efforts, such as podcasts, video and audio clips, and interactive education components on the internet, to reengage young people's interest in the park and offer a virtual experience for those who aren't able to experience this remote and special place in person. Park staff are seeking creative partnerships to implement web improvement projects, increase ranger led programs for all visitors, and enhance education and outreach efforts.

DRT0 management is working to ensure that staff assigned to this remote location has the skills, tools, and equipment they need to provide the best visitor experience possible and continue their own personal and professional growth. Training in scuba diving, emergency medical treatment and other key skills are a priority for those who become part of the DRT0 team. A relatively small staff, these training efforts are critical for an effective and motivated workforce. DRT0 is also developing strategies to maximize and effectively prioritize and tartget the limited staff, volunteer, and financial resources to achieve these goals by 2016.

DRT0 is committed to meet the challenges of implementing the RNA and protecting this unique marine resources along with providing opportunities to a vast national and international audience to experience this park meeting the goal and intent of the NPS centennial challenge.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Dan Kimball

Site: DRT0

STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Improve the condition of park resources and assets.**

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

Preserve the Loggerhead Key Lighthouse.

Refurbish the deteriorating walls of historic Fort Jefferson.

Establish funding requests in PMIS which rehabilitate whole assets and focus on improving the condition of visitor facilities and critical infrastructure.

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

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

Stabilize Fort Jefferson.

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

☒ **Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.**

Complete submerged cultural resource inventory of the Park

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

Site: DRT0

STEWARDSHIP

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

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Restore the Fort Jefferson Parade Ground/Cultural Landscape

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

Site: DRT0

STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.**

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Interpret the park as an authorized site on the Underground Railroad: Network to Freedom program.
Complete a historic inscription documentation of inscriptions from the Spanish-American War Era.

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

Site: DRT0

STEWARDSHIP

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

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Complete the science monitoring plan and implement to assess the success of the research natural area in protecting the marine resources of DRT0.

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

Site: DRT0

STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Encourage children to be future conservationists.**

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Seek funding to staff the Florida Keys EcoDiscovery Center in Key West and to offer NPS-generated interpretive programs from there.

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

Site: DRT0

ENVIRONMENT

☒ **Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.**

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

Design and construct replacement facilities which reduce maintenance, utilize recycled and environmentally safe products, reduce energy and water consumption. Replace all water consuming fixtures with low flow plumbing fixtures. Reduce solid waste streams through green purchasing and recycle most remaining solid waste.

Reduce energy consumption through implementation of comprehensive building conservation measures with the goal of providing alternative energy as a primary or offsetting source of power. Reduce or eliminate green house gas emissions and criteria air pollutants from equipment and fixed generators. Substitute bio-fuels, propane, and photo-voltaic energy for the operation of diesel powered equipment.

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☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Park planning and compliance programs play a key role in reducing the environmental impacts of park operations. The planning program focuses on activities that support park legislative and policy requirements, mission goals, and long term goals. Through a broad range of projects, the planning program helps to focus park managers, staff, community leaders, and cooperating organizations on critical challenges associated with :better protecting park resources, providing higher quality visitor experiences, improving the quality of facilities and operational functions and establishing the parks as more meaningful parts of the South Florida Community.

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

Site: DRT0

ENVIRONMENT

☒ Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

☒ Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

Continue to support the solar project put in place with a private partner as a research project that provides a portion of the power needs on Loggerhead Key in the DRT0.

Develop more efficient use of energy and reduce reliance on large generators in the park.

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

Site: DRT0

ENVIRONMENT

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

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Participate as partner at the Florida Keys EcoDiscovery Center with staff and operational support.

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

Site: DRT0

RECREATION

☒ Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Work with NOAA and the State of Florida to develop underwater trails.

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

Site: DRT0

RECREATION

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

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Seek funds to develop and deploy an audio tour for Dry Tortugas.

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

Site: DRT0

EDUCATION

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

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Through grant funds, develop and initiate a curriculum-based education program using the Florida Keys Eco Discovery Center and in class ranger presentations, culminating with a day-trip to the park.

Seek funds to staff the Florida Keys Eco Discovery Center in order to offer educational programming.

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

Site: DRT0

EDUCATION

☒ **Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.**

☒ **Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.**

Seek funding and partnership opportunities to create podcasts and web-based interactive programs.

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

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Seek funds to develop and deploy an audio tour for Dry Tortugas to ensure high-quality interpretive programs for the park's 90,000 annual visitors.

Seek funds to maintain the use of mass media through the production of Waterways Television.

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

Site: DRT0

EDUCATION

☒ **Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.**

☒ **Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.**

Working with our partners, develop a Junior Ranger-type program for the Florida Keys EcoDiscovery Center.

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

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Develop, fabricate and install a new generation of interpretive wayside exhibits in the park.

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