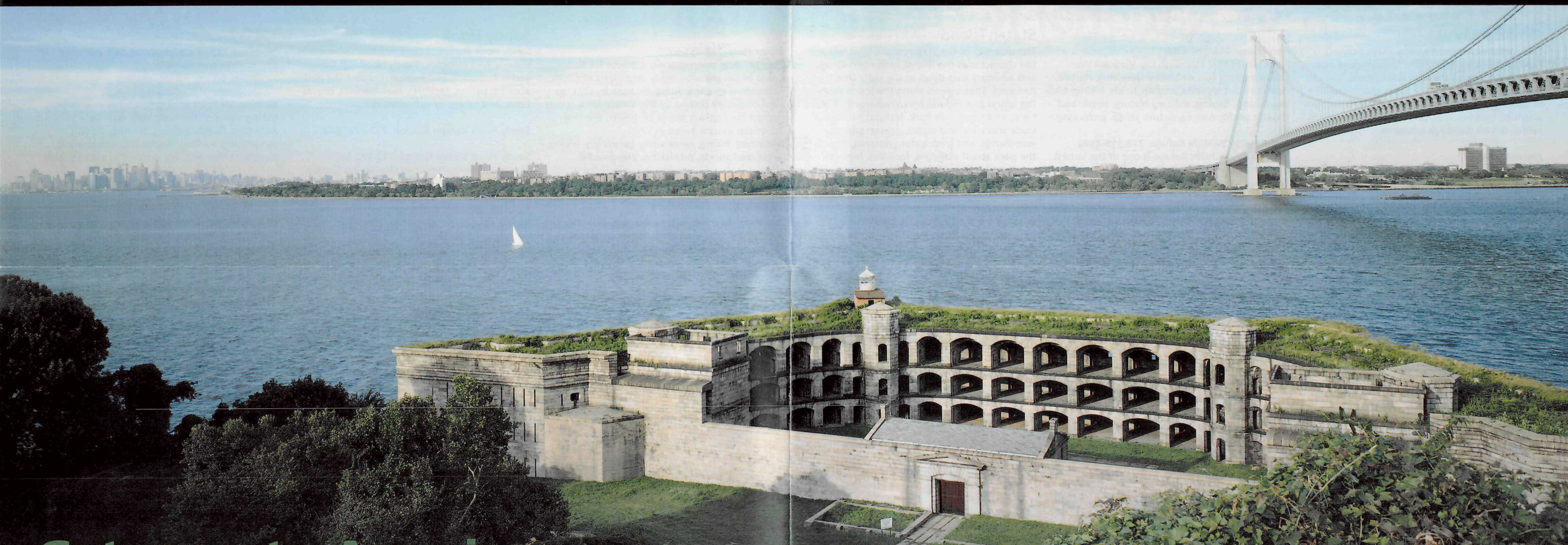




Gateway to America

Gateway National Recreation Area embraces an area known for over a century as the "Gateway to America." Covering over 26,000 acres, the park extends from Sandy Hook, New Jersey, along the south side of Staten Island to Jamaica Bay and Breezy Point in New York. Assembled from city parks, military sites, and undeveloped land, Gateway weaves together history, nature, and recreation areas to create

an extraordinary national park. Congress designated Gateway National Recreation Area in 1972 as one of the first urban parks in the National Park System. Today the park showcases the importance of open space, adds to the quality of life for city residents, and preserves habitat for thousands of species of plants and animals. This connection between ecological and urban systems is a hallmark of Gateway.

Having Fun at Your Park Gateway National Recreation Area is a great waterfront park with outstanding recreational facilities for fun and self-expression. You can enjoy ocean swimming, sailing, kayaking, canoeing, sunbathing, and fishing. Off the beach and water, you can find places for cycling and jogging, golf and archery, hiking and horseback riding, and birding, picnicking, or reading a book after a

tough day at work. There are fields and courts for baseball, football, rugby soccer, cricket, and basketball. If you feel a creative impulse, you'll find that the park is home to actors and artists, gardeners and musicians, modelmakers and astronomers. Best of all, Gateway is a place where you can choose to just relax in an exceptional setting.

Life-long Learning Gateway is more than a playground—it is an outdoor classroom where people of all ages can learn about history, nature, and stewardship. You can visit historical areas that explain the defense of New York Harbor, the growth of aviation, and the building of navigational aids that have guided ships in the harbor for centuries. If you like nature you can learn about ecosystems, shoreline dynamics,

plants and animals, and more. Stewardship—saving our natural and cultural resources for future generations—is something everyone can enjoy. Activities range from butterfly counts to the preservation of historic aircraft. Help us safeguard this special place by treating it with care and respect. You can join in the commitment and be a steward for your national park.

View of Battery Weed at Fort Wadsworth and Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. NPS / Brian Feeney

A Closer Look at Nature

Protected/Preserved Gateway's thousands of acres protect habitats as diverse as the sand dunes at Sandy Hook and the backwaters of Jamaica Bay. Our active resource management gives you a chance to enjoy outdoor experiences, from quiet walks in coastal woodlands to fun in the Atlantic surf.



Sand dunes

Enhancing Habitats Stewardship is an important principle of the National Park Service at Gateway. Rangers, volunteers, and environmental groups work together to accomplish environmental goals like re-establishing grasslands and wetlands. You can help—call the park for information.



Grasslands



Prickly pear cactus

Surprising Plants Trees as varied as holly and oak, grasses short or as tall as you, and wildflowers of all colors grow profusely in the protected habitats at Gateway. Prickly pear cactus—a surprise to many of you—is well adapted to the sandy, dry interdunal areas in the park.



Piping plover



Scarlet tanager

Birds Galore Over 330 species of birds—from as far north as the Arctic and as far south as South America—have been recorded in the park. Thousands rest and feed here during migrations along the Atlantic Flyway (right). Gateway is one of the best birding spots in the Northeast.



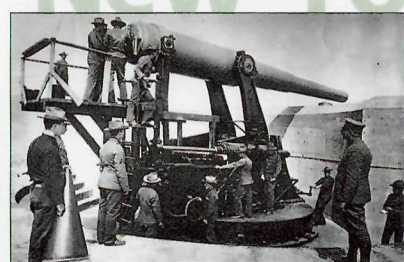
Animals on the Move Gateway is a migratory bonanza. Bats, butterflies, birds, and fish stream through Gateway's rich environs on their annual migrations along the coast. Spring is marked by the return of horseshoe crabs to the park's shallow bays. In the fall, thousands of hawks migrating south hunt along the dunes.



Monarch on goldenrod

Defending New York

The United States defended its shores for centuries with a complex system of fortifications. One heavily defended area was New York City, the nation's center for business and finance. The harbor defense system started in lower Manhattan and eventually extended to Sandy Hook, N. J. Principally active during wartime, New York's harbor system defended the region until the late 1900s. You can see the best remnants of these harbor defenses at Forts Wadsworth and Hancock.



Fort Wadsworth disappearing rifle, 1907



Fort Hancock, 1942

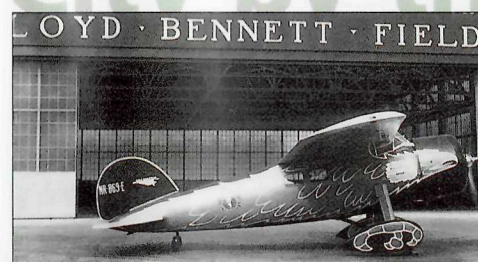


Fort Hancock Nike missile, 1955

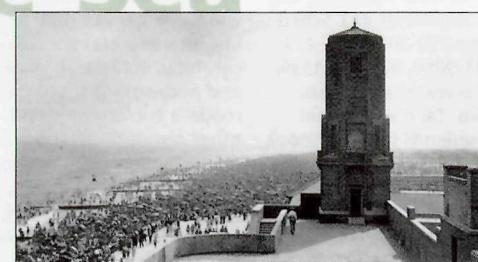
Fort Wadsworth Staten Island's Fort Wadsworth—Guardian of the Narrows—guarded the entrance to New York Harbor for over 200 years. Because of its strategic location, Fort Wadsworth continually evolved as new technology became available. From Battery Weed, the Civil War-era gun battery, to modern anti-ship batteries that served through World War II, Fort Wadsworth presented a formidable defense. Today when you visit these fortifications, you can see the harbor from the highest point in the city.

Fort Hancock Sandy Hook Peninsula has long served as a site of military importance and innovative technological developments. In 1874 the U.S. Army established the nation's first weapons proving ground here, and in 1895 built Fort Hancock as the outermost defense point for New York City. Over the years the defenses included concrete gun batteries, anti-aircraft positions, and advanced Nike missiles. You can explore this 1800s military post, one of the best preserved in the Northeast.

City by the Sea



Aviator Jimmy Mattern's Lockheed, 1933



Jacob Riis Park, 1955



Sandy Hook Lighthouse, 1913

Floyd Bennett Field Boasting its strong concrete runways and modern facilities, Floyd Bennett Field opened as New York City's first municipal airport in 1931. In the 1930s the airfield became legendary for its record-breaking flights by aviators like Wiley Post, Howard Hughes, and Jacqueline Cochran, the first female pilot to break the sound barrier. Ownership of the field passed to the U.S. Navy in 1942; it was the busiest military airport in the United States during World War II.

Jacob Riis Park In 1936 Robert Moses, the influential New York City parks commissioner and politician, designed Jacob Riis Park with an innovative eye for public space. The city developed the site in 1912 as a public beach, but Moses put forward plans that remodeled the bathhouse and introduced landscaped walkways, boardwalks, and courtyards. The park's name is a salute to Jacob Riis, the prominent social commentator and photographer. The park is a refreshing getaway on hot summer days.

Sandy Hook New York City merchants, wanting to guide cargo safely through the harbor to Manhattan, financed the building of the Sandy Hook Lighthouse. First lighted on June 11, 1764, the Sandy Hook Light is the oldest lighthouse in the nation, and it is still an active aid to navigation. The lighthouse originally stood at the end of the peninsula, but centuries of shifting currents have driven sand northward. Today the lighthouse is over a mile from the tip of the peninsula.

Gateway

Enjoying Your National Recreation Area

Jamaica Bay

The park areas of Jamaica Bay, Floyd Bennett Field, and Breezy Point cover thousands of acres in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens. You can explore natural and historic areas and relax alone or with friends and family. Contact the park about activities, facilities, fees, permits, regulations, and safety, or visit www.nps.gov/gate.

Emergencies: 911
or U.S. Park Police: 718-338-3988

Floyd Bennett Field 718-338-3799
Famous aviators used New York City's first municipal airport for record-breaking flights during the pioneering days of aviation. The field became one of the country's most important naval air stations.
Activities Aircraft restoration, biking, birding, exhibits, gardening, group camping, hiking, fishing, kayaking, military history, nature study, picnicking.

Jacob Riis Park 718-318-4300
New York City created this park in the early 1900s to give residents a new seaside recreation area.
Activities Basketball, biking, golf, paddle tennis, picnicking, sunbathing, swimming, volleyball.
Caution: Lifeguards are on duty in summer only.

Fort Tilden 718-318-4300
From World War I through the Vietnam War, this important fort defended New York Harbor.
Activities Art exhibits, athletic fields, biking, birding, hiking, fishing, military history, music and theater performances, nature study, picnicking.

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge 718-318-4340
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge is one of the largest bird sanctuaries in the northeastern United States. Over 330 species of birds have made this an important stopping point along the Atlantic Flyway.
Activities Birding, hiking, nature-study programs, photography.

Canarsie Pier 718-763-2202
This historic pier offers you a place to relax or to do some of the best fishing on Jamaica Bay.
Activities Playground, fishing, kayaking, picnicking.

Frank Charles Memorial Park
This park's tree-lined paths in the Howard Beach section of Queens offer a refuge from urban life.
Activities Baseball, basketball, handball, picnicking, playground, tennis, walking track.

Staten Island

The diversity of the Staten Island Unit reflects the character of the island, with open spaces and a history that dates to the early Dutch settlements. Sites extend along the south shore of the island and include Fort Wadsworth, Miller Field, and Great Kills Park. Natural habitats include shoreline and dunes, grassy uplands, woodlands, and freshwater wetlands. Contact the park about activities, facilities, fees, permits, regulations, and safety, or visit www.nps.gov/gate.

Emergencies: 911
or U.S. Park Police: 718-338-3988

Fort Wadsworth 718-354-4500
Fort Wadsworth is one of the oldest military sites in the United States. Remnants of military times that you can see and learn about include Civil War-era gun batteries and 1900s anti-ship batteries.
Activities Biking, birding, fishing, hiking, panoramic views of New York City, ranger-led tours of historic fortifications, self-guiding tours.

Miller Field 718-351-6970
This 187-acre open space is a mecca for thousands of people who enjoy organized athletics. Completed as a U.S. Army Air base in 1921 on land originally owned by the Vanderbilts, it was named for Captain James Ely Miller, the first American aviator killed in WWI.
Activities Biking, community gardening, hiking, organized sports, picnicking, playground.

Great Kills Park 718-987-6790
This park on the southeastern tip of the island offers a quiet getaway in a coastal environment.
Activities Beaches, biking, birding, boating, fishing, hiking, in-line skating, jogging, nature study, picnicking, swimming.
Caution: Lifeguards are on duty in summer only.

Sandy Hook

Sandy Hook features ocean beaches, salt marshes, historic Fort Hancock, Sandy Hook lighthouse, and outstanding bird habitat. Contact the park about activities, facilities, fees, permits, regulations, and safety, or visit www.nps.gov/gate.

Sandy Hook Ranger Station: 732-872-5900

Sandy Hook Visitor Center 732-872-5970
The 1894 Spermaceti Cove Life-Saving Station serves as the park visitor center. Trails lead to salt marshes and a maritime holly forest.
Activities Birding, bookstore, exhibits, hiking, ranger-led tours, tour planning.

Multi-use Path Path begins at park entrance and ends at Fort Hancock.
Activities Biking, hiking, skating.

Beaches Six miles of ocean beaches offer breathtaking views of the New York skyline.
Activities Beachcombing, birding, fishing, sunbathing, surfing, swimming, windsurfing.
Caution: Lifeguards are on duty in summer only.

Fort Hancock
This coastal post was the outermost defense for New York Harbor from 1895 until 1974. Visit History House, a restored officer's home, Battery Potter, parade ground, and Battery Gunnison.
Activities Exhibits and historic sites (seasonal), military history.

Sandy Hook Lighthouse and Keepers Quarters
The nation's oldest lighthouse has guided ships into New York harbor since 1764.
Activities Lighthouse tours; check website for schedules.

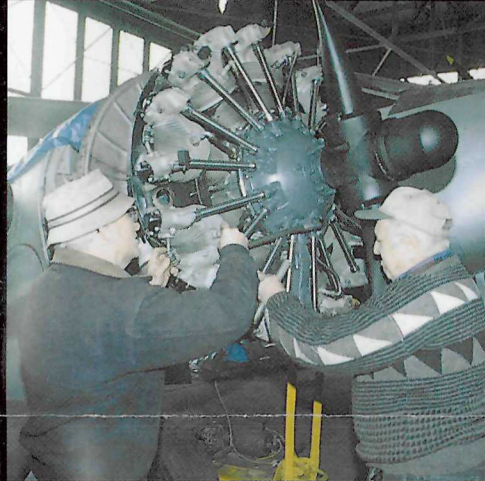
Sandy Hook Bird Observatory
New Jersey Audubon Society operates a center on Officers Row for birding information.



Students learn about nature at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.



Friends and families enjoy the beach at Jacob Riis Park.



Volunteers restore a plane at Floyd Bennett Field.



Reenactors parade at Sandy Hook Lighthouse.



Teams enjoy after-school sports at Miller Field.

Getting there

Jamaica Bay Unit
Floyd Bennett Field
Subway: #2 (#5 rush hour) to Flatbush Ave., take Q35 bus. Ask driver to let you off at park.

Bus: Connect with Q35 on Flatbush Ave. Ask driver to let you off at the park.

Auto: Belt Pky. to Exit 115; take Flatbush Ave. south to park entrance.

Jacob Riis/Fort Tilden
Subway: #2 (#5 rush hour) to Flatbush Ave., take Q35 bus to park. Or: A or S to Rockaway Park, then Q35 or Q22 bus.

Bus: Connect with Q35 on Flatbush Ave. to Ft. Tilden or Riis Park.

Auto: Belt Pky. to Exit 115, then Flatbush Ave. south across Marine Pky. Bridge to park. Or: Woodhaven Blvd. to Cross Bay Blvd., west on Beach Channel Dr. to park.

Canarsie Pier
Mass transit: L subway to Rockaway Pky., transfer to B42 bus to pier.

Auto: Belt Pky. to Exit 13, Rockaway Pky.

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Subway: A to Broad Channel Station. Walk on Noel Rd. to Cross Bay Blvd., turn right, go ¾-mile to visitor center.
Bus: Q21 from Liberty Ave. (Queens) or 116th St.

(Rockaway). Or: Q53 from 61st St. & Roosevelt Ave. (Queens) to refuge.

Auto: Belt Pky. to Exit 17, Cross Bay Blvd. Go south on Cross Bay Blvd. over North Channel Bridge. Refuge is about one mile beyond bridge at traffic light.

Staten Island Unit
Miller Field
Train: SIRT at Staten Island Ferry Terminal to New Dorp Station, then walk to Miller Field.

Bus: S76 from Staten Island Ferry Terminal to entrance of Miller Field.

Auto: Verrazano-Narrows Bridge from Brooklyn or the Goethals Bridge from New Jersey to the Staten Island Expressway, Rt. 278; take Hylan Blvd. exit. Go south on Hylan Blvd.; go east on New Dorp Lane.

Great Kills Park
Bus: S78 from Staten Island Ferry Terminal or S79 from 86th St. at 4th Ave., Brooklyn, to the park entrance.

Auto: Verrazano-Narrows Bridge from Brooklyn or the Goethals Bridge from New Jersey to the Staten Island Expressway, Rt. 278; take Hylan Blvd. exit. Go south on Hylan Blvd. to park entrance at Buffalo St.

Fort Wadsworth
Bus: S51 from Staten Island Ferry to park

entrance on Bay St. S53 from 86th St. and 4th Ave., Brooklyn.

Auto: Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, after toll take Bay St. exit to park. Or: Staten Island Exp. (Rt.278) east to Lily Pond Ave. exit; left at light and follow road to Bay St. and park.

Sandy Hook Unit
Sandy Hook
Train: New Jersey Transit's North Coast Line to Red Bank, then NJT 834 bus to Highlands. For schedules call: 800-772-2287.

Bus: New Jersey Transit 834 bus stops near park entrance. Schedules: 800-722-2222 or www.njtransit.com. Academy Bus Lines from New York City to Highlands, N.J. Schedules: 732-291-1300, 212-971-9054, 800-212-1339, or www.academybus.com. Take a taxi from Highlands to Sandy Hook (taxi entrance fee is waived).

Auto: Garden State Pky. to Exit 117; follow Rt. 36 east for 12 miles to park.

Boat: In summer ferry service operates between Manhattan and Sandy Hook. Shuttle buses run only with the ferry service in season at Sandy Hook; buses do not pick up at the park entrance or at the town of Highlands.

Planning Your Visit

Activities and Services
Contact the park or visit www.nps.gov/gate.
Jamaica Bay: 718-338-3799
Staten Island: 718-354-4500
Sandy Hook: 732-872-5970

Events Calendar A free quarterly calendar, *Gateway Visitor Programs and Event Guide*, describes activities and events. Contact the park to get your copy.

Safety and Regulations
Remember, your safety is your responsibility. Ask the park for details about safety, regulations, and permits. • In natural areas watch out for ticks and poison ivy. • Do not enter areas posted for habitat protection. • Pets must be leashed and attended at all times. Service animals are welcome. • Swim only in life-guarded areas. • Drive carefully. Vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians share park roads. • For firearms and other regulations, check the park website. • Do not disturb or destroy plants, animals, rocks, or natural or cultural features; all are protected by federal law.

More Information
Gateway National Recreation Area
Public Affairs Office
210 New York Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10305
718-354-4606
www.nps.gov/gate

National Park Service:
www.nps.gov

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Gateway National Recreation Area

