
Chapter Seven

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**Delaware National Coastal Special Resource Study Team and
Advisors**

Introduction

This chapter describes the required consultation procedures and public meetings and comments related to the preparation of the Delaware National Coastal Special Resource Study.

Notice of Intent

A notice of intent to conduct a Special Resource Study/ Environmental Impact Statement was published in the Federal Register on May 31, 2007.

Public Scoping Meetings

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), public scoping meetings were held on October 9, 2007 in Milford, Delaware at the Milford Volunteer Fire Department and in New Castle, Delaware at the Buena Vista Conference Center on October 10, 2007. Approximately 50 people attended in Milford and another 40 attended in New Castle. The study team introduced the project, reviewed the Special Resource Study process, the criteria for new areas of the national park system, and the NEPA process. NPS staff also provided a brief overview of the prior park initiatives that had taken place in Delaware. Potential sites that the study would be investigating and evaluating were discussed. The study team described the opportunities for the public to participate in the planning process, and to provide comments during the study, and took questions from participants at each of the meetings. At the close of the meetings attendees were reminded that they could submit ideas about other resources that should be considered by sending email or by adding comments on-line through the National Park Service Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) web site. They were informed that there would be further opportunities to comment throughout the study process, and other meetings.



Stakeholder meeting at New Castle Court House. NPS photo.

Stakeholder Meetings

On July 10, 2008 the study team held a series of four meetings with representatives of various natural and cultural resources in all three counties of the state: New Castle, Kent and Sussex. The point of these small group meetings was to share the preliminary results of the study team's research and analysis of sites and themes, and concepts for potential management alternatives. The meetings also provided a time to answer questions that people might have regarding the study process and the results of the team's analysis.

Other Public Meetings

In September 2008 two evening meetings were initiated by the NPS to explain the results of the study team's efforts over the past year. The study team was interested to receive feedback on the preliminary management alternatives, and also to hear people's ideas about possible locations for a potential administration and visitor services facility.

The first meeting on September 23 was held in Dover, Delaware at the Delaware State Archives research room. About 40 people attended. On September 25 a second meeting was conducted at the Buena Vista Conference

Center near New Castle. Again the attendance was approximately 40 people. The NPS staff presented a PowerPoint presentation, and there was a question and answer period afterward at both meetings.

Additional Group Meetings

Members of the study team often briefed the staff of Senator Thomas Carper's Wilmington office on the status of the study. On March 10, 2008, the National Park Service's Northeast Regional Director, Dennis R. Reidenbach, Associate Regional Director, Robert W. McIntosh, and the study team briefed Senator Carper on the preliminary alternatives.

Meetings were also held in 2007 and 2008 with the Director of the Delaware State Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, the Director of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, and agency staff members. There was a separate meeting with members of Senator Thomas Carper's original National Park Study Team.

Staff of Senator Carper's office and state officials accompanied the NPS study team on many of their site visits to resources that were considered during the reconnaissance phase of the study and attended public meetings.

Written Communications

A few individuals and elected officials wrote to indicate their interests in the study and in the designation of a unit of the national park system in Delaware. One individual suggested an archeological park concept comprising Fort Christina, Fort Casimir and Swanendael. The writer stated his desire that the NPS own the resources of any proposed national park. Another writer supported the establishment of a national park in

Delaware. The local governing body of the city of New Castle adopted a resolution proposing that the visitor services facility for a potential park be located in that community. Additionally, the New Castle Historical Society Board of Directors passed a resolution supporting a proposed National Park that incorporates sites in New Castle and which would have a visitor services facility located in New Castle. These letters and resolutions can be viewed at the study team's offices at the address in the Executive Summary of this report.

Consultation

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and National Park Service Management Policies 2006, require formal consultation with State Historic Preservation Offices when special resource studies are conducted. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires all federal agencies to consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded or carried out by a federal agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitat.

Consultation was conducted through letters to the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and the North Atlantic Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. NPS received a written response from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Consultation with one American Indian Tribe was conducted by letters to the Delaware Tribe of Indians, as well as a letter to the NPS Native American Graves and Repatriation Act Office (NAGPRA). The letters requested that these entities identify any issues regarding the study, their interest in future participation, resource identification and potential for collaborative action. No letter of response or other communication was received from either organization.

The Delaware State Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Delaware Tribe of Indians and the NPS NAGPRA office will be requested to review and comment on this Special Resource Study during the 30-day public comment period.

All consultation request letters and response letters can be viewed in the appendix.

Delaware National Coastal Special Resource Study Team and Advisors

National Park Service Northeast Region Study Team

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