

Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

General Management Plan • Newsletter 1 • Spring, 2001

Dear Friends,

On December 2, 1999, President William Clinton signed a bill establishing Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, located in southwestern South Dakota, to commemorate the role of the Minuteman defense system in world peace. Two facilities – Delta One, a launch control facility and Delta Nine, a missile silo – make up one of the newest additions to the National Park System. A property of the U. S. Air Force, these reminders of the Cold War will be transferred to the National Park Service late in 2001. Now, we need your help in planning for the future of this National Historic Site. We are preparing a general management plan that will guide the management of the National Historic Site for the next 15 to 20 years. Your input into the plan's development is very important.

Currently, Minuteman Missile is not open to the public nor does it have a dedicated budget. It is being administered through the efforts of Badlands National Park, located seven miles from Delta One. Congress requires that a general management plan be started within two years of the establishment of all new areas and has appropriated funds for the planning process starting in spring, 2001. This plan will be prepared in tandem with a similar plan under way for Badlands National Park to make best use of financial and human resources.

Legislation such as the National Park Service's Organic Act of 1916 and the National Park System General Authorities Act of 1970 provide fundamental direction for administration of national park system sites. The general management plan for Minuteman Missile National Historic Site will build on these and other laws to provide goals and a vision for the park's future. The general management plan will also provide practical guidance in resource protection and management that will help achieve that vision.

On behalf of the National Park Service, I invite your participation in this vital act – planning for a new national park. The story of Minuteman Missile National Historic Site transcends international boundaries and generational perspectives. It is a part of the world's history and yet a tale of our times. We estimate the planning process will take a little more than two years. This newsletter provides information about the process and how you can get involved. Your participation will ensure a strong public voice as this new story joins the collection of Cold War memories.

William R. Supernaugh
Superintendent

General Management Planning

National Park Service (NPS) general management planning guidelines focus on three questions:

1. Why was this park established?

What is the park's purpose and significance?

2. What is the vision for its future?

What resource conditions and visitor experiences do we desire?

3. How do we accomplish our vision?

What actions are needed to create this desired future?

These questions will focus the planning effort and provide guidance in the preparation of the management plan. The plan will then guide overall future park management, protection of natural and cultural features or resources, visitor use, and facility development. The plan will not include specific facility designs, resolve all issues, or guarantee funding for the park.

Statements of the park's purpose and significance help provide answers to the WHY questions and establish the foundation for the general management plan. All concepts and actions in the plan must be consistent with this foundation. Also, park managers will use these statements to help make operational decisions long after the plan has been completed.

Developing a vision for the park's future (answering the WHAT question) is the primary role of the general management question. Comments from park visitors and the general public are very important in the identification of issues and the development of possible management strategies (called alternatives) for managing the park in the future. For example, one alternative might focus on opening facilities within the site for visitor use. Another alternative might limit access to some facilities to protect resources. Evaluating a set of alternatives enables us to compare the advantages and disadvantages of one course of action over another and provides a sound approach to decision making required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

Most HOW questions will be answered in interpretive plans and others that come after the general management plan.

The Planning Team

A multidisciplinary team will lead this planning effort. The team will include park staff as well as natural and cultural resource specialists, planners, and landscape architects from the National Park Service's Denver Service Center. Geographic information specialists, editors, graphic staff, and others will support the planning team.

Park Purpose

The act describes the Site's purpose as:

- To preserve, protect, and interpret for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations the structures associated with the Minuteman II missile defense system.
- To interpret the historical role of the Minuteman II missile defense system as a key component of America's strategic commitment to preserve world peace
- To interpret the broader context of the events of the Cold War.
- To complement the interpretive programs relating to the Minuteman II missile defense system offered by the South Dakota Air and Space Museum at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

Park Significance

President William Clinton signed "the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Establishment Act of 1999" on December 2 of that year. This act states:

- The Minuteman II intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) facilities known as "Delta 1" and "Delta 9" have national significance as the best preserved examples of the operational character of American history during the Cold War.
- The facilities are symbolic of the dedication and preparedness exhibited by the missileers of the Air Force stationed throughout the upper Great Plains in remote and forbidding locations during the Cold War.
- The facilities provide a unique opportunity to illustrate the history and significance of the Cold War, the arms race, and ICBM development.

How You Can Participate

Public involvement is critical to the success of the planning effort. We encourage you to be involved through a variety of methods.

You can begin this feedback process by completing the enclosed comment form. Please let us know your thoughts, comments, and suggestions on what should be addressed in the general management plan. After you have finished filling out the postage-paid form, just fold and tape it and drop it in a mailbox.

You can also log on to the National Park Service planning web page at <http://planning.nps.gov/plans.cfm> or go directly to the park's website at <http://www.nps.gov/mimi>. All newsletters will be posted or linked at the websites along with an electronic response form if you would like to comment electronically.

During each planning phase, you will have the opportunity to participate in public open houses where you can learn about the process and planning products and talk to members of the planning team.

For more information about the planning process and park issues, contact William Supernaugh, Superintendent, at 605/433 – 5280 or by e-mail at mimi_information@nps.gov

Keeping You Informed

Newsletters such as this one will be distributed at each stage of the planning process. The newsletters will explain what has occurred to date, explain the next steps to be taken and supply information on how you can be involved in public open houses. The "General Management Plan Steps" chart summarizes when and how you can help in this process. A similar chart will be included in each newsletter with the current step highlighted.

The Planning Process

There are typically three broad phases to producing a general management plan, with each phase consisting of several steps. During the first phase the planning team sets goals, identifies issues, and collects data related to these issues. Efforts during the second phase focus on defining alternate ways to achieve goals, and resolve issues. Typically, three to five different management alternatives will be identified and one alternative will be chosen as the National Park Service's preferred action, which is the alternative the National Park Service believes best fulfills our statutory missions and responsibilities. The planning team then compiles this information in a document known as a draft general management plan and environmental impact statement, which includes an analysis of the impacts of implementing each of the alternative ways of achieving the goals and resolving the issues. After public review, the team considers and incorporates appropriate public comments and prepares a final general management plan and environmental impact statement. A record of decision, which is the official approval of one of the alternatives for managing the park, is issued no less than 30 days after distribution of the final plan. When funding becomes available, park managers implement the approved general management plan. Public involvement is critical throughout the process.

Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

What Are Your Concerns? How Do You Participate?

We encourage you to let us know if you have thoughts or comments about what you have read in this newsletter. We especially would like to have you share your thoughts, comments, and suggestions on what should be addressed in the general management plan. Please [email your comments](#) by June 22, 2001.

If you would like to be included on our mailing list, please include your name and the complete address to which you would like mail to be sent. Should you have any questions on the planning process, please call Superintendent William Supernough at 605/433-5280 or email mimi_information@nps.gov

General Management Plan Steps			
Phase	Step	Planning Activity	Public Involvement Opportunities
I Current Phase	1	Initiate Project: The planning team is formed and the team begins to identify the project's scope and issues and sets goals.	Read this newsletter and comment on the response form. Make sure you are on the mailing list.
	2	Identify Planning Context: The team examines WHY Congress established the park and reaffirms the park's significance, purpose, and mission. Team members collect and analyze relevant data and public input.	Participate in public open houses.
II	3	Develop and Evaluate Alternatives: The planning team explores WHAT the park's future should look like and proposes and assesses a range of reasonable alternatives for achieving goals and resolving issues.	Read newsletters and send in your comments. Participate in public open houses.
	4	Prepare a Draft Document: Based on the impacts identified in the environmental impact statement and public comments, the team identifies a preferred alternative. The team produces and publishes a draft general management plan and environmental impact statement (GMP/EIS) that discusses the planning context, HOW each of the management alternatives would attain desired future conditions, and the impacts of implementing each of the alternatives.	Read the draft plan and send in your comments. Participate in public open houses.
III	5	Publish Final Document: Based on public comment, environmental analysis, and other information, the team revises the draft GMP/EIS and distributes it to the public.	Read the final plan.
	6	Implement the Approved Plan: After the record of decision is issued, when funding is available, implementing the approved management plan.	

Where We Are

This planning effort is just beginning and we are trying to identify the issues this plan will address. Many factors guide and direct park planning. The most important of these are the legislation that created the park and the National Park Service's 1916 Organic Act. Additionally, the National Park Service must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and other legislation and regulations. These legal mandates provide the broad management and development guidance for the park as well as context for the planning effort.

To learn more: Visit the park's website at <http://www.nps.gov/mimi>

Informal Public Open Houses

Please plan to attend one of the open houses to talk with members of the planning team about your ideas and concerns for Minuteman Missile National Historic Site.

Monday, June 18

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Wall Community Center
501 Main Street
Wall, South Dakota

Tuesday, June 19

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Black Hills Visitor Information Center
Exit 61, Interstate 90
Rapid City, South Dakota