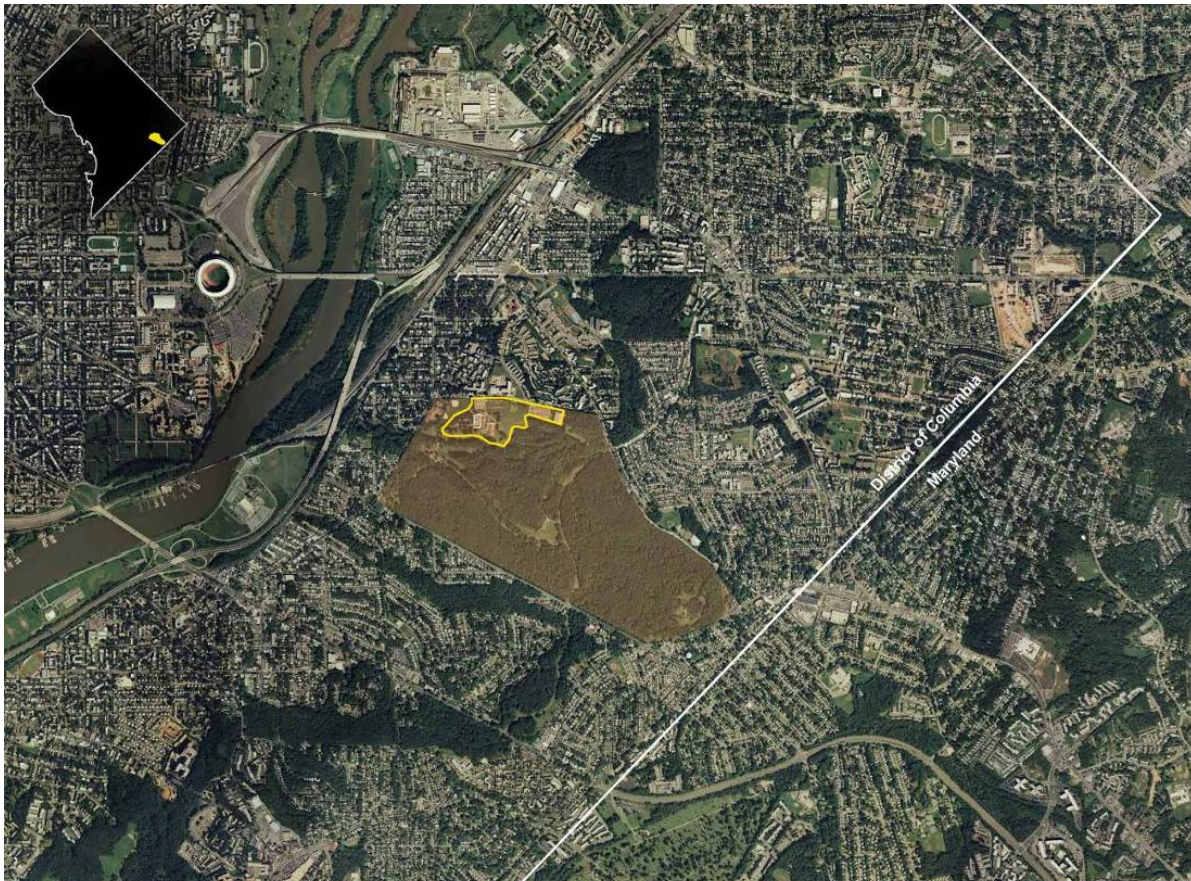




TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION OF CERTAIN NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PROPERTIES TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT (*NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS – EAST: FORT DUPONT PARK*)



Environmental Assessment

October 2008

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PROJECT SUMMARY

The National Park Service (NPS) and District of Columbia (District) propose to transfer jurisdiction of approximately 15 acres of NPS property to the District to facilitate the improvement and expansion of recreational facilities currently located at Fort Dupont Park in Washington, D.C.'s southeast quadrant. The approximately 15-acre area proposed for jurisdictional transfer is situated in the northern portion of Fort Dupont Park, bounded by Ely Place SE to the north, Minnesota Avenue SE to the west, and Ridge Road SE to the east (the Project Area). The proposed enhancements to the recreational facilities include the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Rink and the addition of a Youth Baseball Academy. The proposed transfer of jurisdiction of NPS property to the District of Columbia is needed to facilitate the improvement and expansion of these sports related recreational facilities.

This environmental assessment (EA) evaluates two alternatives: the no action alternative (alternative 1) and the preferred alternative (alternative 2), which proposes to transfer jurisdiction of the Project Area to the District. The transfer of jurisdiction is needed to facilitate the improvement and expansion of sports related recreational facilities. Alternative 2 provides four separate options for the possible configuration of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena expansion and three separate options on how the proposed Youth Baseball Academy facilities could be configured on the site. Under this alternative, the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would be expanded to approximately twice its current size and a Youth Baseball Academy would be established on site. The Youth Baseball Academy would require the construction of a building to support administrative functions and three ball fields, including one regulation sized baseball field, two softball fields, and associated parking. One of the options presented under this alternative also includes a multi-purpose sports field (i.e., football/soccer field). The three existing basketball courts and four existing tennis courts located within the Project Area would remain; however, managerial responsibilities would be transferred from NPS to the District. If implemented, the land that is jurisdictionally transferred would no longer be managed by NPS and no longer part of Fort Dupont Park. In addition, while the essential uses of the Project Area would remain, the transfer of jurisdiction would necessitate amending the NPS's 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*, which provides a managerial framework for decisions about use and development within the Fort Circle Parks, including Fort Dupont Park. The no action alternative does not change the current layout, condition, or management of Fort Dupont Park.

Impacts of the proposed alternatives were assessed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the NPS's Director's Order 12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*, which requires that impacts to park resources be analyzed in terms of their context, duration, and intensity. Several impact topics have been dismissed from further analysis because the proposed action alternatives would result in negligible to no effects to those resources.

Note to Reviewers and Respondents:

If you wish to comment on the EA, you may mail comments directly via US Post or submit them electronically. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Mailed comments can be sent to:

Superintendent, Fort Dupont Park, National Capital Parks - East
Fort Dupont Land Transfer EA
1900 Anacostia Dr. SE
Washington, DC 20020

Comments can also be submitted on-line by following the appropriate links at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/NACE>

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PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The National Park Service (NPS) and District of Columbia (District) propose to transfer jurisdiction of approximately 15 acres of NPS property to the District to facilitate the improvement and expansion of recreational facilities currently located within Fort Dupont Park in Washington, D.C.'s southeast quadrant. The approximately 15-acre area proposed for jurisdictional transfer (the Project Area) is situated in the northern portion of Fort Dupont Park, bounded by Ely Place SE to the north, Minnesota Avenue SE to the west, and Ridge Road SE to the east (see Figure 1). The proposed enhancements to the recreational facilities would include the addition of a new Youth Baseball Academy and the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Rink. Fort Dupont Park is an administrative unit of National Capital Parks–East, a branch of the NPS that includes 13 Park sites¹, parkways, and statuary covering more than 8,000 acres of historic, cultural, and recreational parklands from Capitol Hill to the nearby Maryland suburbs.

Fort Dupont Park is a large urban park (376 acres) that contains a variety of culturally significant resources, recreational facilities, community assets, and some of the largest uninterrupted forested and natural areas in the District. The cultural resources are related to the significance of the Park during the Civil War, when Fort Dupont was one of several fortifications that protected the city against Confederate attack from southern Maryland. The most prominent cultural resource at the Park is the actual earthen fort located near the easternmost corner of the Park. It was completed in January 1862 and is visible today, despite being mostly covered with vegetation (Robinson & Associates 2004). Today, the recreational facilities within the Park include ballfields, tennis and basketball courts, picnicking areas, ice skating, and hiking and biking trails (see Figure 1 on the following page). Community assets include small garden plots for local residents to plant vegetables and flowers and the Fort Dupont Summer Theatre, a venue that offers free concerts during the summer months. Fort Dupont Park also serves as the location for a NPS maintenance facility and the U.S. Park Police (USPP) stables.

This environmental assessment (EA) evaluates two alternatives: the no action alternative (alternative 1) and the preferred alternative (alternative 2), which proposes to transfer jurisdiction of the Project Area to the District. The actions proposed after the transfer of jurisdiction include four separate options on the possible configuration of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena expansion and three separate options on how the proposed Youth Baseball Academy facilities could be configured within the Project Area. One of the options for the Youth Baseball Academy maintains the multi-purpose sports field that is currently on site. If implemented, the land that is jurisdictionally transferred would no longer be managed by NPS and no longer part of Fort Dupont Park. In addition, while the essential uses of the project area would remain, the transfer of jurisdiction would necessitate amending the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*, which provides a managerial framework for decisions about use and development within the Fort Circle Parks, including Fort Dupont Park (please refer to page 5 and 6 for more detail regarding the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan* and amending procedures). The no action alternative does not change the current layout, condition, or management of Fort Dupont Park.

This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508, and NPS *Director's Order 12 and Handbook, Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making* (NPS 2001). Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 has been conducted in conjunction with the NEPA process.

If it is determined after this EA process that there are no significant impacts to resources within Fort Dupont or the District and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would not be required, decision documents would be prepared by the NPS and the District that summarize the findings of the EA and

¹ Other park units managed by National Capital Parks - East include: Anacostia Park, Capitol Hill Parks, Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site, Fort Washington Park, Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, Greenbelt Park, Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, Langston Golf Course, Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site, Oxon Cove Park/Oxon Hill Farm, Piscataway Park, and Sewall Belmont House and Museum.

provides a concise rationale on how the NPS and the District each made their final decision. Once completed, the District (in accordance with 40 USC - Sec. 8124) would then present this proposal and all accompanying compliance documents to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) for approval and to ensure compliance with all pertinent city plans. If NCPC approves the proposal, it would then provide its recommendation of the transfer to the District of Columbia City Council for its approval. Following City Council approval, the proposed project could be then carried forward. District authorities would be responsible for reporting this transfer of jurisdiction to Congress.

Figure 1: Project Area



PURPOSE OF THE ACTION

The purpose of the action is to respond to the proposed transfer of jurisdiction of NPS property to the District of Columbia for the improvement and expansion of sports-related recreational facilities within Fort Dupont Park.

NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The need for the proposed transfer of jurisdiction of NPS property to the District of Columbia is to facilitate the improvement and expansion of sports-related recreational facilities currently located within Fort Dupont Park.

PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PARK

Authorized by Congress in 1912, Fort Dupont Park is one of the Fort Circle Parks, a corridor of parks created when several former Civil War fortifications that circled the city were linked. Fort Circle grew from the plan to improve the park system of the District of Columbia described in the McMillan Commission Report of 1902. The lands that make up Fort Dupont Park were acquired partially by donation as part of the comprehensive development of parkland for the nation's capital. This donation fulfilled the comprehensive plan's mandate to preserve the forests and natural scenery in and about Washington, D.C. and to prevent pollution of the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers as stated in authorizing legislation.

Fort Dupont was constructed as part of a ring of fortifications that protected Washington during the Civil War. The actual earthen fort, located on strategically important high ground (303 feet above sea level) near the eastern-most corner of the Park, was completed in January 1862 on private farm land. The earthwork remains of Fort Dupont, mostly covered with vegetation, are visible today. Fort Dupont was named after Rear Admiral Samuel Francis Du Pont, a Union commander of the South Atlantic Blockade Squadron during the Civil War.

In addition, the NPS established two Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps in October 1933; one at Fort Hunt in Virginia and the other at Fort Dupont in the District of Columbia. Eighty percent of the personnel of the Fort Dupont CCC camp were employed in work to improve Fort Dupont Park. The CCC continued working in and around Fort Dupont until March 25, 1942. It was estimated that the CCC workers at Fort Dupont Camp had expended 224,600 man days and \$83,100 in funds. The buildings constructed and used by the CCC were offered to the park in 1944 (NPS 2008c).

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The proposed transfer of jurisdiction needed for the expansion and improvement of the sports related recreational facilities (the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and the development of a Youth Baseball Academy) addresses the growing need and sentiment to provide organized recreational opportunities for the adjacent communities in Ward 7 of the District and the city as a whole.

The Fort Dupont Ice Arena

The Fort Dupont Ice Arena is the only public indoor ice arena located in the District. It is owned by the NPS, but leased to the Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena (FDIA), a not-for-profit 501(c)3 formed in 1996 in response to the then pending closure of the rink by the NPS (FDIA 2008a).

The mission of FDIA is to provide increased opportunity, education, and inspiration to the youth in the surrounding area through ice skating and educational activities. The organization partners with public and private schools, summer camps, churches and local community organizations to promote and deliver the arena's many programs such as Kids on Ice, which provides free figure skating, and hockey and speed skating lessons to economically disadvantaged children (FDIA 2008a).

In the past 12 years, the FDIA has revitalized the facility through major repairs, including a new addition to house offices and an educational meeting room complete with eight computer workstations, a refurbished lobby and concession stand, and an expanded skate shop. It now effectively functions as a safe community center for the surrounding neighborhood (FDIA 2008a).

However, there is currently too high a demand for the services provided by FDIA. The programs at the ice arena are oversubscribed, preventing the initiation of new programs as well as the opportunity for additional youth to participate in the available recreational opportunities. As a result, the FDIA has been working on expanding its facilities over the past several years to include a second rink with upgraded services and amenities to best serve the community and the District (FDIA 2008b).

Youth Baseball Academy

The background and history of the expansion of sports related activities for the Project Area began in January of 2006 when the Council of the District of Columbia had asked for and received a number of concessions from Major League Baseball (MLB) as part of the overall lease agreement between the Washington Nationals major league baseball team (Nationals) and the District of Columbia. These community benefits included the funding of a Youth Baseball Academy for District school children. As part of this agreement, the Nationals and the District committed to a partnership to build the Washington Nationals Youth Baseball Academy to teach the fundamentals of baseball and provide after-school educational programs for children in the Washington metro region. The Nationals and the District government (including the DC Sports and Entertainment Commission) collaborated on a preliminary action plan, which identified this site as a potential venue for the Baseball Academy (Devroux & Purnell, 2007).

This site was selected for several reasons, including:

- it contains a sufficient amount of land;
- the accessibility of the site to roads and adjacent parking and public transportation;
- its location east of the Anacostia River and in proximity to three public schools; and
- its location in a residential area with a large concentration of youth currently underserved by educational and recreational enrichment programs and facilities.

The initial program and facilities proposed for the baseball academy were modeled after the Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) program operated by MLB and located in the East Harlem neighborhood of New York City, and MLB's Urban Youth Academy in Compton, California (Devroux & Purnell, 2007). Like these successful programs, it was envisioned that the academy would use baseball and softball to provide District youth (ages 7-18) with a year-round opportunity to not only learn athletic and life skills, but to gain experience in playing these sports as part of a team. The academy would also provide the opportunity for youth to learn educational and vocational skills and the experience of jobs and activities related to these sports, such as grounds keeping, umpiring, coaching, sports medicine, sports broadcasting, and journalism. In addition, the academy would offer youth mentoring, counseling, and academic tutoring programs (Devroux & Purnell, 2007).

Due to NPS policy constraints, it was infeasible for these proposed projects to be constructed on property administered by the NPS. As a result, the District of Columbia collaborated with the NPS to provide the needed land to make these projects possible, which necessitated the transfer of land from the NPS to the District of Columbia, an action that triggered the NEPA process.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PLANS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

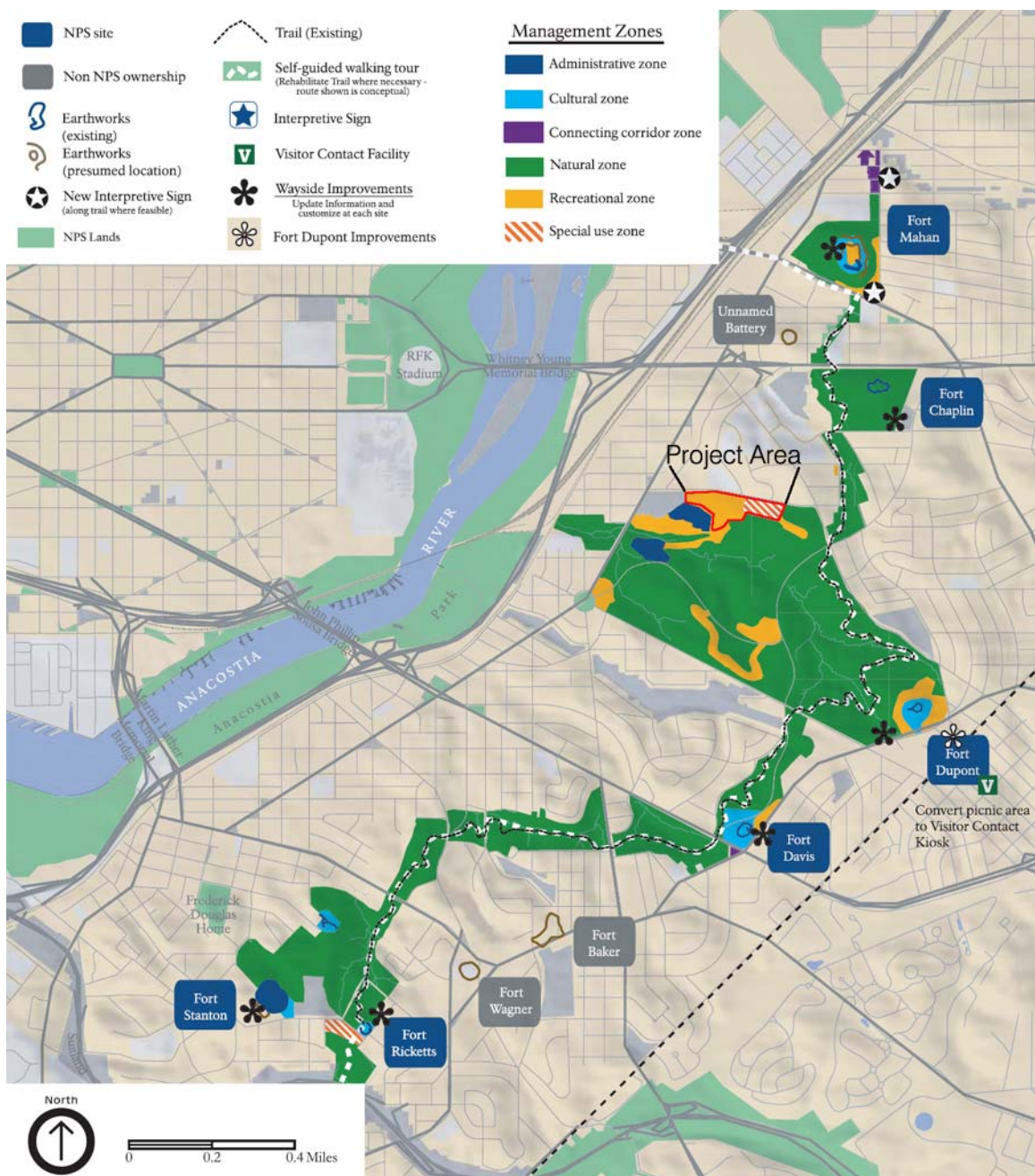
NPS Fort Circle Parks – *Final Management Plan 2004*

The Final Management Plan provides broad direction for the use, management, and development of the Fort Circle Parks. The first inception of the plan, the *Fort Circle Parks Master Plan* of 1968, was developed to provide similar guidance, but it was never fully implemented (NPS 2004). The current document focuses on the management of cultural and natural resources, visitor use, recreation, interpretation, and education.

Within the plan, the NPS assigns zones to separate areas of each of the Fort Circle parks to provide a framework for decisions about use and development, and to establish specific management emphasis (i.e., recreation, natural or cultural resource preservation, or special use). Figure 2 delineates the Fort Circle Park management zones.

In addition, “management prescriptions”, or approaches for managing the resources or uses of a specified area, are articulated for each zone based on goals and objectives. Different physical, biological, and social conditions are emphasized in each zone indicating the types of activities or facilities that are appropriate in each area. Regardless of the target visitor experience or resource condition, all management prescriptions conform to all park-specific purpose, significance, and mission goals. For example, an archeological site will be protected regardless of the zone it is in. However, the use of that site for interpretive or educational purposes might vary, depending on the management prescription applied to its area.

Figure 2 on the following page shows the Project Area, which includes a roughly rectangular tract of land that incorporates the Special Use Zone and a portion of Recreation Zone. Those areas designated as Special Use Zones are areas of the Fort Circle Parks given over to facilities or uses not fully under the control of the NPS. Examples are the water reservoirs at Forts Reno and Stanton, schools and playgrounds, the Anacostia Museum, the Fort Dupont Ice Arena, and recreational centers operated by the District of Columbia. Recreation zones contain areas where recreational facilities have been developed or those that have been designated for specific activities; for example, picnic areas, community gardens, or baseball, basketball, or softball/soccer fields, along with their associated parking areas. These areas are not associated with the Civil War defenses and do not contain earthworks or other historic or archeological resources.

Figure 2 – Fort Circle Parks Management Zones

The proposed transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area from NPS to the DC government for recreational purposes would preserve the existing land uses and would be consistent with the designated management zones delineated in the NPS 2004 *Fort Circle Parks Final Management Plan*, however, the Project Area would no longer be managed by NPS and no longer a part of Fort Dupont Park. In the event that the proposed action is carried forward, decision documents would be prepared that summarizes the findings of the EA and provides a concise rationale on how the NPS and the District made their final decisions.

Because the NPS did not anticipate the transfer of jurisdiction at the time of its writing, the 2004 *Fort Circle Parks Final Management Plan* would need to be amended to reflect the change in management if

the proposed action is selected and carried forward. However, due to the relatively small size of the project area (less than 15 acres) and the fact that the existing land uses would be preserved, the amendment would consist of appending the management plan with this EA and the accompanying NPS decision document. Appending these documents to the management plan would serve to:

- Explain why the transfer was needed;
- Describe how the process of the transfer would occur;
- Delineate the exact area that would be jurisdictionally transferred from the NPS to the District;
- Define managerial responsibilities of the project area and accompanying facilities after the transferred has occurred;
- Describe the resulting impacts of the transfer and proposed expansion and improvements to the sites sports facilities; and
- Provide the overall justification for the transfer.

LOCAL PLANS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan Update (2006)

In December 2006, the District Office of Planning completed the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: District Elements. This Plan focused on Washington, D.C. as a whole, including federal elements, the framework of many established neighborhoods, and the role of transportation. The Plan also focused on resource areas, such as Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Environmental Protection, Economic Development, Parks Recreation and Open Space, Urban Design, Historic Preservation, Community Services and Facilities, Educational Facilities, Infrastructure, and Arts and Culture. The Plan is not intended to be a substitute for more detailed plans, nor does it dictate precisely what other plans must cover. Rather, it is the one document that bridges all topics and is cross-cutting in its focus. It is the only Plan that looks at the “big picture” of how change will be managed in the years ahead.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space element of the Plan addresses the future of parks, recreation, and open space in the District. It recognizes the important roles that parks play in recreation, aesthetics, neighborhood character, and environmental quality. It includes policies on related topics such as recreational facility development, the use of private open space, and the creation of trails to better connect the city’s open spaces and neighborhoods. The critical parks, recreation and open space issues facing the District are addressed in this element. These include:

- Coordination between the District and the federal government on park and open space planning and management;
- Providing additional recreational land and facilities in areas of the city that are currently underserved and in newly developing areas; and
- Maintaining, upgrading, and improving existing parks and recreation facilities as key features of successful neighborhoods in the District.

Policy defined within this plan states that where consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and NPS management policies and where supported by nearby neighborhoods and overall need, encourage federal government projects that would provide new recreational amenities such as soccer fields, picnic areas, and trails serving District residents on national parkland. It also states that park resources in federal ownership should be identified, in cooperation with appropriate federal agencies, which could potentially be transferred to the District for recreational purposes [(Action PROS-3.1.F): Park Land Transfers]. The proposed transfer of jurisdiction of a portion of Fort Dupont Park to the District for the improvements and expansion of recreational activities would be in adherence with the District Comprehensive Plan (NCPC 2006).

Capital Space Initiative

The District Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), DC Office of Planning, NCPC, and NPS are collaborating in an initiative to promote, protect, enhance, and grow the District's current parks and open space system. Currently, the District has multiple green open spaces, fields, playgrounds, and courts, but they are owned by multiple agencies. There is currently a shortage of outdoor recreational facilities, especially regulation-sized playing fields, to meet the demand for active recreation. In addition, the open spaces for passive recreation are disparate and unconnected.

The goals of this initiative are to establish a coordinated, connected citywide system of parks that serve the needs of District neighborhoods, as well as to attract scarce resources for wise investments to design, operate, and maintain the city's parks and open space to the highest standards (DPR 2008).

The Capital Space strategic plan builds on existing park management plans, including the 2004 *Fort Circle Parks Management Plan*. Capital Space proposes to create a connected greenway around the District, as intended by the McMillan Plan, and create destinations within local communities for recreation, interpretation, and education opportunities. The initiative also encourages the identification of opportunities for developing one or more active outdoor recreation complexes to serve the entire District.

The proposed jurisdiction transfer of NPS property to the District for expanded and improved recreational opportunities would assist in fulfilling the goals of the Capital Space Initiative that comport with the 2004 *Fort Circle Parks Management Plan* and the 2006 District Comprehensive Plan, as described above.

40 USC - Sec. 8124 - Transfer of jurisdiction between Federal and District of Columbia authorities

Federal and District authorities that administer properties within the District of Columbia owned by the federal government or by the District may transfer jurisdiction over any part of the property among or between themselves for purposes of administration and maintenance under agreed-upon conditions by all parties. If following the EA process it is determined that no significant impacts to resources would occur as a result of this proposal and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would not be required, decision documents would be prepared that summarize the findings of the EA and provides a concise rationale on how the NPS and the District made their final decisions. Once completed, compliance documents, would be presented to the NCPC for its approval in accordance with 40 USC - Sec. 8124 (Transfer of jurisdiction between Federal and District of Columbia authorities). Upon approval, NCPC would provide its recommendation for the transfer to the Council of the District of Columbia. Following approval by the Council, the project could then begin in earnest. District authorities would be responsible for reporting this transfer of jurisdiction to Congress.

SCOPING

On May 12, 2008, the NPS and the District held a public scoping meeting to initiate public involvement and solicit community feedback on the proposed action to transfer jurisdiction of NPS property to the District. The meeting was held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Sousa Middle School, 3650 Ely Place SE, Washington, DC 20019. This location was chosen because it is the largest available District-owned venue in close proximity to the site. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting.

The NPS and the District sent out 622 public scoping letters to members of the FDIA, nearby residents, community organizations, and other organizations. In addition, notification of the meeting was advertised in the May 2008 issue of the *East of the River* newspaper (Appendix C). The public scoping meeting was also announced on the NPS's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website (www.parkplanning.nps.gov/NACE).

The public scoping meeting provided numerous methods by which the public could comment on the proposed action. At the meeting, the NPS and the District engaged in an open dialog with the meeting participants, soliciting comments regarding the proposed action. These comments were recorded on a flip chart. If the commenter did not want to provide verbal comments, written forms were provided to be completed and returned at the meeting. If the attendee chose not to complete a comment form at the meeting, a return address was provided on the sheet to mail back to the Park at a later date. Those

attending the meeting were also instructed of an additional opportunity to comment on the project through the NPS's PEPC website.

The public scoping comment period began on April 29, 2008 with the email notification of the public scoping meeting. The public scoping period concluded on July 24, 2008, as announced by the June 24, 2008 Federal Register notice (Volume 73, Number 122) (Appendix C). During the public scoping comment period, NPS and the District received hundreds of comments from citizens throughout the District providing support for the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena. There were also multiple comments expressing support for the Youth Baseball Academy and several that expressed concern regarding the potential for the proposed ice arena expansion to be sited within the adjacent forested area directly to the south of the current facility.

ISSUES

Issues describe problems or concerns associated with current impacts from environmental conditions or current operations, as well as problems that may arise from the implementation of any of the alternatives. Potential issues associated with this project were identified by the public, Park staff, and input from other agencies consulted.

Visitor Use and Experience. Currently, the Fort Dupont Ice Arena serves over 10,000 people per year; however, due to its aging infrastructure and the increasing demand, the Fort Dupont Ice Arena cannot accommodate all who wish to use the facility.

Natural Resources. Activities associated with the expansion of the ice rink could impact up to one acre of forested area to the south and east of the current ice rink.

IMPACT TOPICS

The following impact topics are discussed in the “Affected Environment” chapter and analyzed in the “Environmental Consequences” chapter. The topics are resources of concern that could be beneficially or adversely affected by the actions proposed under each alternative and were developed to ensure that the alternatives are evaluated and compared based on the most relevant resource topics. These impact topics were identified based on the following: issues raised during scoping, federal laws, regulations, executive orders, NPS 2006 *Management Policies*, and NPS knowledge of limited or easily impacted resources. A brief rationale for the selection of each impact topic is given below, as well as the rationale for dismissing specific topics from further consideration.

Physiographic Resources (Geology, Topography, and Soils)

Activities associated with the proposed transfer of jurisdiction and the subsequent development of the baseball academy and the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would disturb approximately three acres of soil, resulting in the loss of soil productivity, and increasing the potential for soil erosion and loss of topsoil during construction. In addition, some grading and filling would be required. As a result of potential impacts to soils from the no action and proposed action alternatives and potential modifications to the geologic and topographic resources at Fort Dupont Park, physiographic resources are addressed as an impact topic in this EA.

Visitor Use and Experience

The existing ice arena is over 30 years old and is in poor condition. The limited space does not meet the demand for additional off-ice programming such as birthday parties, additional office space, of exercise and warm-up space for figure and speed skaters (FDIA 2008b). Therefore, the existing facilities are a detriment to the overall quality of the visitor experience for ice arena users. By transferring jurisdiction of NPS property to the District, expansion of Fort Dupont Ice Arena and the establishment of the baseball academy will provide expanded and improved recreational and learning opportunities for District area youth. Therefore, the development of these recreational facilities would provide an overall benefit to visitor use. Construction activities associated with proposed action alternatives would have short-term direct impacts to the overall visitor enjoyment and use of those who recreate near the project site. As a

result of the potential impacts from both the no action and proposed action alternatives, impacts to visitor use and experience are addressed as an impact topic in this EA.

Socioeconomic Resources

There are multiple socioeconomic characteristics that may be affected by the proposed action, such as population characteristics/demographics, local economic characteristics, housing characteristics, community services or facilities, and types of local businesses that operate in proximity to the site. The jurisdiction transfer of NPS property to the District would enable the current recreational facilities to be enhanced and expanded, which would better serve the local community and economy. As a result of likely impacts, this impact topic was carried forward for further analysis in this EA.

Park Operations and Management

The proposed transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area to the District of Columbia for the improvement and expansion of recreational facilities would necessitate amending the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*, would remove all managerial responsibilities the NPS has on that parcel while placing an added burden on the District's Department of Parks and Recreation. In addition, the jurisdictional transfer would also necessitate amending the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*. As a result of impacts to park operations and management, this topic was carried forward for further analysis in this EA.

IMPACT TOPICS DISMISSED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATION

The following impact topics were eliminated from further analysis in this EA. A brief rationale for dismissal is provided for each topic. With mitigation, potential impacts to these resources would be negligible and localized.

Water Quality

The 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended by the Clean Water Act of 1977, is a national policy to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters; enhance the quality of water resources; and to prevent, control, and abate water pollution. The NPS 2006 *Management Policies* provides direction for the preservation, use, and quality of water originating, flowing through, or adjacent to park boundaries. The NPS seeks to restore, maintain, and enhance the water quality within the parks consistent with the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, and other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

During the construction of the proposed recreational facilities, soils would be exposed, creating an increased potential for erosion and/or transport of surface pollutants into adjacent storm sewers, and ultimately into the tributaries and stormwater sewers that empty into the Anacostia River. An erosion and sediment control plan would be developed prior to construction, pursuant to the District's Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Program. This plan would outline measures and protocols to be implemented during construction aimed at reducing erosion of exposed soils, slowing the rate at which water leaves the site, and capturing eroded soils and concentrated nutrients before entering the downstream water flow. In addition, due to the topography of the site and the distance to any stream, stormwater runoff on the site not captured by the stormwater conveyance system would flow through grassed and forested areas before entering any tributary, effectively capturing eroded soils and nutrients before entering the watershed. Due to the site's topography, proper implementation of these measures would reduce the potential for adversely impacting water quality, and the resultant adverse impacts to the water quality of the Anacostia River during the construction would be negligible and of short duration and occur only during storm events.

During construction, protocols would also be developed to protect against potential groundwater contamination during construction, including implementing proper on-site refueling techniques, properly storing and handling of hazardous materials, and developing notification and containment procedures in the event of a spill. These protocols would also provide protection to the overall quality of surface waters

and would help ensure that any spills that may occur are contained and cleaned up prior to entering any ground or surface waters via either overland flows or stormwater conveyance systems.

After construction, under any of the action alternatives, the total amount of impervious surface on the site would likely only increase by less than an acre. Increasing the total amount of impervious surfaces can increase both the volume of stormwater runoff and the amount of sediments and pollutants transported to the Anacostia River via the stormwater sewer systems during storm events. Under any of the action alternatives, there would be no noticeable permanent change in the volume of stormwater discharge generated on the site. In accordance with the District of Columbia's Stormwater Management Guidebook (2001) and 21 D.C. Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Chapter 5 (Sections 526-535: The District of Columbia-Storm Water Management Regulations), stormwater discharge generated on a newly developed site must be equal or below pre-development peak discharge. Prior to construction, a stormwater management plan would be developed for the operation of the proposed new facilities. This plan would address the increase in impervious surfaces and subsequent increases in overland runoff by incorporating stormwater control designs into the project to manage the rate at which runoff leave the site. Specific stormwater controls that could be incorporated into the project design to maintain these pre-construction baseline conditions include, but are not limited to:

- Rain Gardens - Rain gardens are a man-made depression in the ground that is used as a landscaping tool to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality. Rain gardens form a bioretention area by collecting stormwater runoff and storing it, permitting it be filtered and slowly absorbed by the soil.
- Pervious Pavements - Pervious pavements is a term used to describe paving methods that are used to reduce stormwater runoff by allowing the movement of water and air through the paving material.
- Bioretention Cells - Bioretention cells are designed to function similar to rain gardens except that they collect larger volumes of runoff generated at sites with a high percent of impervious surfaces. The cells are designed with more temporary storage to accommodate larger volumes of runoff and consequently will have more depth compared to a typical rain garden.

Because stormwater controls would need to be incorporated into the overall site design to prohibit stormwater discharge from the new recreational facilities from surpassing the current stormwater discharge, there would be no added burdens to the current stormwater conveyance systems, or beyond what is currently required.

Maintenance of the athletic fields after construction is completed would likely require the use of fertilizers and pesticides. To assure proper use, application of these fertilizers and pesticides would be accomplished according to manufacturer guidelines. Proper application methods and the fact that a relatively large vegetated buffer exists between the athletic fields and the nearest water course would minimize the possibilities that the applied fertilizers and pesticides would enter the watershed. As a result, adverse impacts to water quality from the application of fertilizers and pesticides on this site would be negligible.

Due to standard erosion and sediment control practices and protocols used to protect against potential groundwater contamination implemented during the construction phase of the proposed alternatives, and the implementation of an approved stormwater management plan and turf management plan, impacts to water quality to nearby waterways and the Anacostia River during both the construction and operation of the proposed facilities would be negligible. As a result, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Vegetation

The NPS and the District determined that expanding the Fort Dupont Ice Arena in an end-to-end configuration, which would have impacted up to an acre of adjacent forested lands, would not be carried through as a viable option under either of the action alternatives (Please refer to the "Alternatives and

Options Considered but Not Carried Forward” section in the following chapter for details regarding this dismissed option). This decision was based on management policies outlined in the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*, the District’s 2006 Comprehensive Plan (Policy PROS-3.1.5: Fort Circle Parks), concerns raised through the public scoping process, and the fact that there are less environmentally damaging alternatives that provide the same results. In addition, no proposed configurations of the baseball academy or multi-purpose field will encroach upon this forested area. As a result, actions associated with either of the proposed action alternatives would only involve the disturbance of paved surfaces and maintained grassy areas, with the possible removal of a few individual trees within those areas. No contiguous forested areas would be impacted. Most of the vegetated area disturbed during construction would be revegetated prior to project completion, and any trees that were removed would be replanted with native species. Implementing any of the options for the action alternative would result in localized negligible adverse impacts on vegetation throughout project construction and during revegetation activities following construction; therefore, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Threatened, Endangered or Special Concern Species

The Endangered Species Act (1973), as amended, requires an examination of impacts on all federally-listed threatened or endangered species. NPS policy also requires examination of the impacts on federal candidate species, as well as state listed threatened, endangered candidate, rare, declining, and sensitive species.

Due to the urban nature of the site, and the fact that the proposed activities would be located entirely within previously disturbed or maintained landscapes, no impacts to any state- or federally-listed species are expected. To confirm this assumption, on June 24, 2008, the Park sent letters to both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the District Department of the Environment regarding the potential for any state- or federally-listed species that could be affected by the proposed construction of an addition to the ice arena or the clearing of land for the baseball academy.

On July 24, 2008, the FWS responded to the Park’s initial informal consultation letter stating that no federally proposed or listed endangered or threatened species are known to exist within the project impact area; as a result this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Prime Farmland

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is the land best suited to food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. It may be cultivated land, pasture, woodland, or other land, but it is not urban and built-up land or water areas. Prime farmland is protected under the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, which minimizes the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary or irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. Because prime farmland does not include land already in or committed to urban development, there can be no designated prime farmland soils within the District. Therefore, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Floodplains

Executive Orders 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires an examination of impacts to floodplains and the potential risk involved in placing facilities within floodplains. The NPS 2006 *Management Policies*, Section 4.6.4, Floodplains; and the 1993 NPS Floodplain Management Guidelines - DO-77-2 provide guidelines on developments proposed in floodplains. Due to the topography of the area, the proposed project area is not located within either a 100- or 500-year floodplain (FIRM 1100010030B, 1985). Therefore, the proposed site is not likely prone to flooding. Because the action alternatives and no action alternative would have no long- or short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains, and would avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Wetlands

Wetlands include areas inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater for a sufficient length of time during the growing season to develop and support characteristic soils and vegetation. The NPS classifies wetlands based on the FWS *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States*, also known as the Cowardin classification system (Cowardin et al. 1979). Based on this classification system, a wetland must have one or more of the following attributes:

- The habitat at least periodically supports predominately hydrophytic vegetation (wetland vegetation);
- The substrate is predominately undrained hydric soil; or
- The substrate is non-soil and saturated with water, or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season.

There are no wetlands mapped within the Park, and no impacts to wetlands would occur as a result of the implementation of any of the action alternatives. As a result, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Air Quality

The 1963 Clean Air Act as amended (42 USC 7401 et seq.) requires federal land managers to follow policies that protect park air quality. The act also assigns the federal land manager (Park Superintendent) an affirmative responsibility to protect the park's air quality related values – including visibility, plants, animals, soils, water quality, cultural and historic resources and objects, and visitors – from adverse air pollution impacts. Section 118 of the Clean Air Act requires that the park meet all federal, state, and local air pollution standards.

The proposed project is located within the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Control Region; an area the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated as in attainment for the following National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) criteria pollutants: particulate matter less than 10 micrometers (PM₁₀), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and lead (Pb). The EPA has designated Washington, D.C. as a moderate non-attainment area for the criteria pollutant ozone (O₃) and as a non-attainment area for particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers (PM_{2.5}). The airshed is also in maintenance for carbon monoxide (CO). Washington, D.C. was designated as in attainment for CO as of March 15, 1996.

Should either of the action alternatives be selected, local air quality would be temporarily affected by dust and emissions from construction vehicles. Hauling materials and operating equipment would result in increased vehicle exhaust and emissions during the construction period. Hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxide, and sulfur dioxide emissions would be rapidly dissipated by air drainage since air stagnation is uncommon at the project site. In addition, fugitive dust plumes from construction equipment would occasionally increase airborne particulates in the area near the project site. Based on projects of similar scale and nature, it is expected that these temporary sources of emissions from construction vehicles and increased dust would not change regional air quality and would fall well below the minimum pollutant levels for a nonattainment PM_{2.5} and a moderate ozone non-attainment area (subject to 40 CFR Part 93 “Determining Conformity of Federal Actions to State or Federal Implementation Plans”). This would result in negligible impacts to air quality to both alternatives during the construction phase (US EPA 2008).

Should the no action alternative be selected, there would be no additional impacts to air quality as this alternative represents the Park's current condition. With the action alternatives, temporary increases in air pollution would occur during construction, primarily from operation of construction equipment.

After construction is complete (operational phase), there would be no regular increase in the number of vehicles traveling within the surrounding roadway network, resulting in no new emission sources or increased vehicular emissions. Since emissions and PM levels would remain below the minimum

thresholds during both the construction and operation phases of this project, this resource was not analyzed further.

Soundscapes

In accordance with the NPS *2006 Management Policies* (NPS 2006) and DO-47, Sound Preservation and Noise Management, an important part of the NPS mission is preservation of natural soundscapes associated with National Park units. Natural soundscapes exist in the absence of human-caused sound. Natural ambient soundscapes are the aggregate of all the natural sounds that occur in park units, together with the physical capacity for transmitting natural sounds. Natural sounds occur within and beyond the range of sounds that humans can perceive, and can be transmitted through air, water, or solid materials. The frequencies, magnitudes, and duration of human-caused sound considered acceptable varies among NPS units, as well as throughout each park unit, being generally greater in developed areas and less in undeveloped areas.

Fort Dupont Park is an urban soundscape that is largely forested and contains recreational facilities, law enforcement structures, parking lots, and other park maintenance facilities. Under either of the proposed action alternatives, construction noise associated with the action alternative would be of short duration, minor, and localized. Because the proposed recreational facilities will be located in an urban area, any impacts from increased noise due to traffic and visitors would be negligible at best. Because the impacts to the local soundscape are expected to be short-term and minor during the construction of the proposed facilities, and negligible or less during the operation of the facilities, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Cultural Resources

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA; 16 USC 470 et seq.), NEPA, NPS 1916 Organic Act, the NPS *2006 Management Policies* (NPS 2006), DO-12 (Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-making), and NPS-28 (Cultural Resources Management Guideline) require the consideration of impacts on any cultural resources that might be affected, and NHPA, in particular, on cultural resources either listed in or eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Cultural resources include archeological resources; cultural landscapes; historic structures and districts; ethnographic resources; and museum objects, collections, and archives.

For this study, efforts to identify cultural resources included a review of information provided by the Park, supplemented by interviews with Park staff, and other published and unpublished sources, including the listings of the NRHP and the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites. For historic structures and cultural landscapes, the principal sources reviewed were D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites, NRHP registration forms, and the Fort Dupont Park Historic Resource Study (HRS) completed in 2004 for the NPS (Robinson & Associates 2004).

The HRS for Fort Dupont Park (Robinson & Associates, Inc. 2004) is the most comprehensive source for the history of the Park, and analyzes and evaluates Fort Dupont Park's historic context, cultural landscape, social use and importance, and NRHP eligibility (Robinson & Associates 2004). Additional historical information pertaining to Fort Dupont is contained in the HRS for the entire complex of Civil War Defenses of Washington (CEHP, Inc. nd).

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) associated with the parcel proposed for jurisdictional transfer includes all areas where new facility construction, utilities construction, and landscaping may occur, as well as areas where new construction or landscaping may have a visual effect. Fort Dupont Park is included within the Fort Circle Parks Management Plan (NPS 2004). The project APE is not within a Cultural Management Zone, rather it is encompassed by the Recreational Zone of the Fort Circle Parks Management Plan (NPS 2004:35).

Cultural Landscapes – According to the National Park Service’s *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (NPS-28), a cultural landscape is:

“...a reflection of human adaptation and use of natural resources and is often expressed in the way land is organized and divided, patterns of settlement, land use, systems of circulation, and the types of structures that are built. The character of a cultural landscape is defined both by physical materials, such as roads, buildings, walls, and vegetation, and by use reflecting cultural values and traditions.”

Fort Dupont was built in 1862 for the protection of the District of Columbia, federal government, and the Union’s military resources during the Civil War. The McMillan Report of 1902 suggested the development of the Civil War forts as parks with an interconnector between them, creating a scenic parkway system to heighten the City Beautiful reform program that was also recommended in the report. In 1912, the federal government retained Fort Dupont and some of the surrounding land for establishing a park and creation of the recommended fort drive. A land acquisition program through various agencies of the government enlarged the park to virtually 400 acres by the time it officially opened as a public park in 1937. To assist in its creation as a neighborhood park during the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) completed many of the improvements, including physical construction and landscaping elements. The CCC camp near the fort earthworks was later used for military storage during World War II.

Many alterations have occurred to the Park in the last 50 years, and the historic appearance of the Park from the 1930s and 1940s no longer survives. The 2004 HRS on Fort Dupont Park evaluated the historic context of the Park and concluded that the cultural landscape of the Park did not possess historical significance and integrity to qualify for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A, B, or C. These criteria generally pertain to significant events, persons, and architectural qualities of a property. The Fort Dupont HRS did not evaluate the Park for NRHP eligibility under Criterion D, which generally is used for archeological resources and pertains to a property’s ability to provide information important in history or prehistory.

Because Fort Dupont Park’s cultural landscape was previously determined not eligible for the NRHP, cultural landscapes was dismissed as an impact topic.

Historic Structures and Districts – Fort Dupont’s earthworks is a contributing property to the National Register listed nomination *Civil War Fort Sites* (1978) and is listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites under *Fort Circle Parks* (1964). Fort Davis Drive, a portion of which passes through Fort Dupont Park, was determined NRHP eligible in 2002 by the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DCHPO) as part of a greenbelt corridor connecting 17 Civil War fort sites. Fort Davis Drive, which connects Forts Davis and Dupont, is the only portion of a planned *Fort Drive* parkway developed in the McMillan Report of 1902 that was to connect each of the Civil War forts around the District.

The area under consideration is designated as a Recreation Zone in the *Fort Circle Parks Management Plan* and does not contain any historic structures or districts (NPS 2004:35). It is approximately 0.30 miles northwest of the NRHP eligible Fort Davis Drive, and nearly one mile from Fort Dupont earthworks. The distance between Fort Davis Drive and the Fort Dupont earthworks to the alternative sites is too great for the proposed land transfer to cause any effects. Views between Fort Davis Drive and Fort Dupont to the subject undertaking are obstructed by vegetation and the area’s natural topography.

The distance of the undertaking to Fort Davis Drive or Fort Dupont earthworks and the lack of a viewshed suggest there would be no impact from the undertaking to these properties.

The NPS will mitigate any potential impacts to the historic and scenic features mentioned in the Fort Circle Parks Management Plan through clearly defined restrictions that will be contained in the land transfer plat. The future use of the property will be comparable to existing recreational functions that will preserve the current setting. Historic structures and historic districts were dismissed as an impact topic.

Archaeological Resources – The primary source for archeological resources are the NPS’ Archeological Sites Information Management System (ASMIS), a database for registration and management of

archeological resources. One previous archeological study (Little 1968) has been completed within Fort Dupont Park. The Historic Resource Study (HRS) for Fort Dupont Park contains a very detailed land use history of the property that is invaluable for assessing whether any as yet undiscovered archeological resources may be present in the study area.

There are no known archeological sites recorded in the ASMIS database for the parcel being evaluated. Although a formal archeological survey of the study area has not been undertaken, a review of the HRS information and a walkover examination of the area indicated that it is unlikely that any as yet undiscovered archeological resources exist in the study area.

The previous archeological study within Fort Dupont Park was completed in anticipation of a campaign for complete restoration of the fort (Little 1968). In addition to a program of historical research, the archeological fieldwork involved trenching across the major features of the fort. As a result, very detailed information was recovered concerning the fort's parapet walls and main ditches, the entrance, the interior Terre plain, the magazine, and two gun platforms (Little 1968). The fort itself is nearly one mile away, far from the parcel under consideration.

There are no archeological sites in the APE, and the history of land use for this parcel indicates that there is virtually no likelihood that significant archeological resources might be present. Prior to the Civil War, the property was contained in large plantations or country estates, but there is no evidence that any structures associated with these holdings were located or near the parcel in question. The property remained essentially vacant until it came into public ownership, and its first major use was a golf course built by the CCC. Construction of the golf course would have involved a significant amount of grading, a process that typically results in the destruction of archeological resources. After the golf course was closed in 1970, the area was redeveloped, and much of the open area is now graded for surface parking, large playing fields, and tennis and basketball courts. Other facilities that currently stand within the study area include an indoor skating rink, an NPS maintenance complex (including a building and storage yard), and U.S. Park Police (USPP) facilities (stables, horse lunge, and manure shed). The NPS and USPP facilities are described in the Park Operations and Management Affected Environment section. Given this land use history, it is concluded that the study area has essentially no potential to contain significant archeological resources.

If during redevelopment of the parcel archeological resources are discovered, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery would be halted until the resources could be evaluated and an appropriate mitigation strategy developed, if necessary. This strategy would be developed in consultation with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office, following the procedures for post-review discoveries found in the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's *Protection of Historic Properties* (36 CFR 800.13). In the more unlikely event that human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are discovered during construction, provisions outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 USC 3001) of 1990 would be followed.

Because no impacts to National Register eligible archeological resources are anticipated and any unanticipated discoveries would be addressed in accordance with 37 CFR 800.13, archeological resources were dismissed as an impact topic.

Ethnographic Resources - Ethnographic resources are defined by the NPS as any "site, structure, object, landscape, or natural resource feature assigned traditional legendary, religious, subsistence, or other significance in the cultural system of a group traditionally associated with it" (Director's Order # 28, Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 181). There is no evidence that Native American groups ever permanently resided within the current boundaries of the Park or near the proposed project area; however, hunter/gatherer parties may have used the project area.

One ethnographic group is associated with Fort Dupont Park: African Americans. Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Procedures (REAP) for Fort Circle Parks were completed in 1997 for the NPS to assist in the development of management plans for each park. Fort Dupont Park was determined a *multiple use park* by "offering a variety of activities" that bring in local and regional visitors of various ethnic groups,

although “certain activities tend to be the domain of particular ethnic groups” (Juarez and Associates 1997). The Executive Summary for the REAP briefly explains the African-American significance of the Park:

Fort Dupont Park is the site of important African American cultural practices, including community gardening that preserves southern food traditions; family reunions that honor the theme of "coming home"; and musical performances featuring gospel, rhythm and blues, blues, jazz, and go-go music, a genre indigenous and unique to Washington. Fort Dupont Park also houses the nation's only all-African American ice hockey team (Juarez and Associates 1997).

Because the undertaking will neither alter the function nor restrict the use of the Park for African-Americans, there will be no effect on the African-American ethnographic group. The proposed alternatives will sustain and possibly enhance the current African-American use of Fort Dupont Park. Because the African-American use of Fort Dupont Park will not be affected by the proposed actions, ethnographic resources were dismissed as an impact topic.

Museum Collections – Implementation of any alternative would have no effects upon museum collections (historic artifacts, natural specimens, and archival and manuscript material); therefore, museum collections was dismissed as an impact topic.

Health and Safety

Currently, all ice skating activities at the Fort Dupont Ice Arena are scheduled and supervised by either coaches or permanent staff members. Because of the inherent safety risks associated with an ice arena (i.e., lacerations, sprains, bruises, and concussions) during the hours of operation, there are always coaches and staff with first-aid training on hand to provide emergency assistance in the event of an accident. Under either of the action alternatives, the ice rink would be expanded to approximately twice its current size. After the expansion, it is expected that that commensurate increases in staff would adequately satisfy the increased use of the facility. Because the ice skating activities within the expanded facilities would be organized and supervised at the same or greater level of the current facility, there would be no noticeable changes in the overall safety of the facility.

There are currently safety concerns related to the existing outdoor sports fields located within the project area (i.e., baseball field, multi-purpose field) which are a result of the under maintained conditions of the fields and lack of formal supervision for most of the activities that occur there. With the proposed improvements to these fields and increased organization and supervision that would occur, the overall health and safety of those using the fields would be increased. However, with the expected increased use of these facilities, the potential for sports-related injuries may increase. Despite the improvements to the fields the potential for sports-related injuries would still exist, resulting in little to no noticeable change to the overall health and safety of those who would utilize the proposed new facilities. As a result, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Traffic and Transportation

Under the proposed action alternatives, impacts on local traffic may occur from the introduction of construction vehicles hauling materials to and from the site during construction of the proposed recreational facilities. Based on the limited number of trips construction vehicles would be making on this road, and mitigations measures taken (i.e., conducting all construction activities during daylight hours, avoiding construction during school and peak traffic hours), impacts from construction would be of short duration and not greater than minor. After construction is completed, parking capacity throughout the entire site would increase by 50 to 120 cars. With the increase in parking, impacts to parking along Ely Road SE would either remain the same or decrease slightly because people using these facilities would probably continue to park on the street out of convenience. There may be slight increases in traffic as a result of the expanded and improved facilities, but these increases would likely occur during off-peak traffic hours, and the resultant impact would not be great. Because traffic impacts within the project area

would be of short duration and less than minor under either of the proposed action alternatives, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Unique Ecosystems, Biosphere Reserves, World Heritage Sites

There are no known biosphere reserves, World Heritage sites, or unique ecosystems listed within or adjacent to Fort Dupont Park; therefore, this impact topic was dismissed from further analysis in this EA.

Environmental Justice

Presidential Executive Order 12898, *General Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, requires all federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their missions by identifying and addressing the disproportionately high and/or adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs and policies on minorities and low-income populations and communities. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, environmental justice is the:

“...fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.”

The goal of ‘fair treatment’ is not to shift risks among populations, but to identify potentially disproportionately high and adverse effects and identify alternatives that may mitigate these impacts.

Both minority and low-income populations are present near Fort Dupont Park; however, environmental justice is dismissed as an impact topic for the following reasons:

- The Park staff and planning team actively solicited public participation as part of the planning process and gave equal consideration to all input from persons regardless of age, race, income status, or other socioeconomic or demographic factors. A public scoping meeting was held in the in the area at the Sousa Middle School on May 12, 2008.
- Implementation of the proposed alternatives would not result in any identifiable adverse human health effects. Therefore, there would be no direct or indirect adverse effects on any minority or low-income population.
- The impacts associated with implementation of the proposed alternatives would not disproportionately adversely affect any minority or low-income population or community.
- Implementation of the proposed alternatives would not result in any identified effects that would be specific to any minority or low-income community.
- Any impacts to the socioeconomic environment would not appreciably alter the physical and social structure of the nearby communities.

ALTERNATIVES

NEPA requires that federal agencies explore a range of reasonable alternatives. The alternatives under consideration must include the “no action” alternative as prescribed by 40 CFR 1502.14. Project alternatives may originate from the proponent agency, local government officials, members of the public at public meetings, or during the early stages of project development. Alternatives may also be developed in response to comments from coordinating or cooperating agencies. The alternatives analyzed in this document, in accordance with NEPA, are the result of design scoping and internal scoping.

The NPS explored and evaluated two alternatives in this EA:

- Alternative 1— No Action Alternative
 - Status quo and no change/amendment to 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*
- Alternative 2 — Transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area from the NPS to the District for the purposes of expanding and improving sports related opportunities on site. Actions would include:
 - Expanding Fort Dupont Ice Arena.
 - Providing all required facilities for the Washington Nationals Youth Baseball Academy.
 - Considering including a multi-purpose sports field. DPR would be responsible for its overall management.
 - Maintaining the current basketball and tennis courts. Responsibility for management transferred to DPR.

ALTERNATIVE 1 – NO ACTION

The no action alternative serves as the baseline by which all other alternatives are compared. Under the no action alternative, jurisdictional responsibilities of the Project Area containing the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and other recreational facilities would remain with the NPS. The Fort Dupont Ice Arena would continue to operate under its current lease agreement by the Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena at its current capacity, with approximately 188 parking spaces. The remaining recreational fields (one baseball field, one multi-purpose sports field, three basketball courts, and four tennis courts) would continue to be maintained by the NPS.

The no action alternative assumes that visitor use trends for the recreational facilities currently found on the site would continue into the future. These trends are generally described in the Affected Environment chapter and are analyzed in the Environmental Consequences chapter.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under this alternative, the NPS would transfer jurisdiction of the Project Area to the District. Within the terms of the jurisdictional transfer all managerial responsibilities of the NPS on the land and Fort Dupont Ice Arena would be transferred to the District and the property would no longer be a part of Fort Dupont Park. This proposed transfer of jurisdiction is needed to facilitate the improvement and expansion of sports-related recreational facilities currently located within Fort Dupont Park. If implemented, the land that is jurisdictionally transferred would no longer be managed by NPS and no longer part of Fort Dupont Park. In addition, the transfer of jurisdiction would necessitate amending the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*.

The proposed improvements and expansion of the recreational facilities within the Project Area include expanding the Fort Dupont Ice Arena, providing the necessary facilities to support the programming requirements of the Washington, D.C. National’s Youth Baseball Academy, considering an option to maintain a multi-purpose sports field, and continuing the existing use of the tennis and basketball courts.

Total parking that could be accommodated under this alternative ranges from 180 to 320 spaces. Each of the proposed elements is described below.

The subject of this EA is the transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area from the NPS to the District. In addition, this EA also considers the subsequent proposal to expand and improve sports-related recreational facilities to the extent these details are presently known. The site plan options developed for this alternative and presented in this EA are conceptual and do not represent any final decisions on the facilities layout within the Project Area. The site plans presented were used as a means of determining the feasibility of the program on the project site (i.e., requirements of the Youth Baseball Academy and Fort Dupont Ice Arena, the size of the athletic fields, administrative building, and parking), and the physical constraints of the site (i.e., Natural Zone south of the site, NPS maintenance buildings, Kimball fields, and the existing tennis/basketball courts). Prior to implementing the options of this alternative, detailed design drawings would be developed that may show changes in the configuration of program elements on the site. The impact analysis in this EA takes into account any future changes that may occur to the selected option's site plan, as long as the program elements of the Youth Baseball Academy and FDIA are preserved, and the site constraints listed above are accounted for.

FORT DUPONT ICE ARENA EXPANSION

The Fort Dupont Ice Arena would be expanded to approximately twice its current size in order to meet increased demand and to improve the aging infrastructure of the current facility. The expanded facility would provide:

- A second pad of ice
- Additional locker rooms
- Additional office, concessions, and maintenance space
- Increased number of off-ice multi-purpose rooms

The configuration of the ice rink expansion avoids impacts to the forested area located directly adjacent to the southern edge of the facility, designated as a Natural Zone in the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*. The ice rink expansion would be constructed in one of two configurations to the existing facility (Figures 3-4).

Ice Rink Expansion - Option A (Figure 3): Option A places the ice rink expansion to the west, parallel to the existing facility. The combined footprint is 215 feet by 270 feet, or 64,000 gross square feet (gsf).

The existing parking lot located immediately to the west of the facility would be reconfigured to accommodate the new expansion, and would include approximately 168 spaces.

Due to the length of the expansion, this configuration would preclude the use of the eastern access point into the lot. There would be a single point of entry/egress at the northwest of the parking lot, off of Ely Place SE.

Ice Rink Expansion - Option B (Figure 4): Option B places the expansion to the west, perpendicular to the existing facility. The combined footprint is "L" shaped with the longest dimensions measuring 350 feet by 215 feet. The gross area is 64,000 gsf.

Figure 3: Ice Rink Expansion – Option A

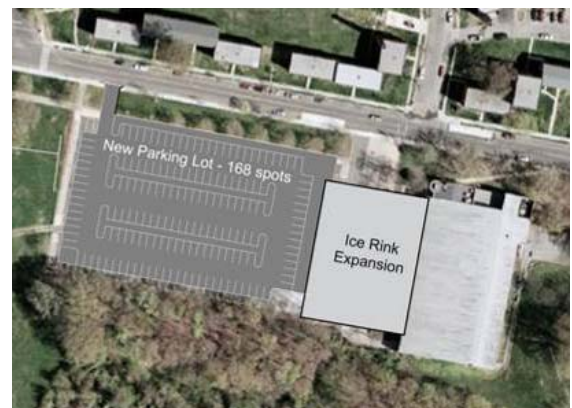


Figure 4: Ice Rink Expansion – Option B



The existing parking lot located immediately to the west of the facility would be reconfigured to accommodate the new expansion and would include approximately 168 spaces. The new parking lot could be configured to provide a turn around/drop off at the far east, near the existing entry point of the ice rink.

Ice Rink Expansion - Option C (Figure 5):

Option C replaces the existing ice rink with a configuration that is approximately twice its original size to accommodate two side-by-side pads of ice. The placement of this new rink would be shifted to the west of the exiting rink on the footprint of the existing parking lot. Parking would occupy the portion of the site that is currently inhabited by the ice rink, immediately adjacent to the western edge of the proposed new ice rink. The current parking count for this option would be about 146 spaces. The limit of construction for this proposed option would be within the current footprint of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and parking lot. The gross area of the proposed ice rink would be about 64,000 gsf.

Figure 5: Ice Rink Expansion – Option C



Ice Rink Expansion - Option D (Figure 6): Option D replaces the existing ice rink with a rink a configuration that is approximately twice its original size to accommodate two side-by-side pads of ice. The placement of this new rink would be shifted to the west of the exiting rink on the footprint of the existing parking lot. Parking would occupy the portion of the site where the ice rink is currently located, immediately adjacent to the eastern edge of the proposed new ice rink. The current parking count for this option would be about 123 spaces. The limit of construction for this proposed option would be within the current footprint of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and parking lot. The gross area of the proposed ice rink would be about 64,000 gsf.

Figure 6: Ice Rink Expansion – Option D



WASHINGTON, D.C. NATIONAL'S YOUTH BASEBALL ACADEMY (BASEBALL ACADEMY)

The Baseball Academy would be a year-long program focused on training and skills development, educational and vocational classroom training, and youth counseling. In order to accommodate its program at the Project Area, an administration building and two types of ball fields would be required.

- **Administrative Building** - This central administration building would accommodate staff offices, classrooms, a lunchroom, and training areas. It would be a two-story facility with a gross area between 12,000-16,000 sf. Under all options the building is located in the center of the project area, immediately west of the ice rink parking lot.
- **Regulation Hardball Field** - For the purposes of this EA, the dimensions for a regulation hardball field are comparable to a high school and college baseball field. The dimension from home plate to the foul line is 350 feet, and the distance from home plate to the center field wall is 375 feet (HKSportsFields, 2008) (Figure 7). These dimensions comport with the Program Statement for the Washington DC Youth Baseball Academy (Devroux & Purnell, 2007).
- **Softball Fields** - The baseball academy would provide two softball fields that would accommodate youth baseball as well as softball. The field should have a distance from home plate to the foul line that measures 190 feet, and the distance from home plate to the center field wall shall not exceed 220 feet. These dimensions are consistent with the National Collegiate Athletic Association standards (NCAA, 2006) and comport with the Program Statement for the Washington, D.C. Youth Baseball Academy (Devroux & Purnell, 2007) (Figure 8).

Figure 7: Regulation Hardball Field (Field #1)

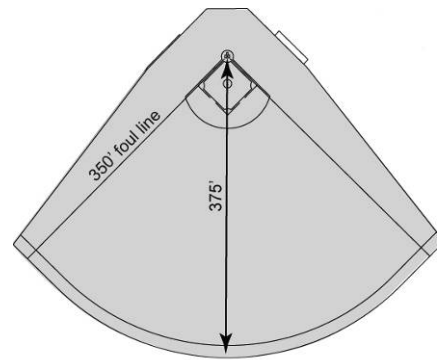
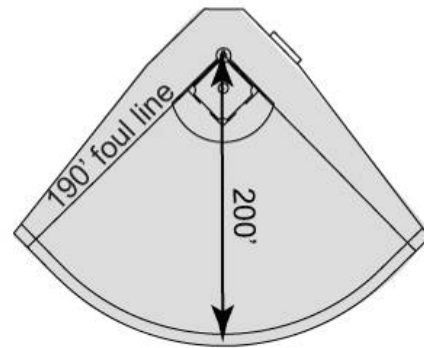


Figure 8: Softball Field (Field #2 & #3)



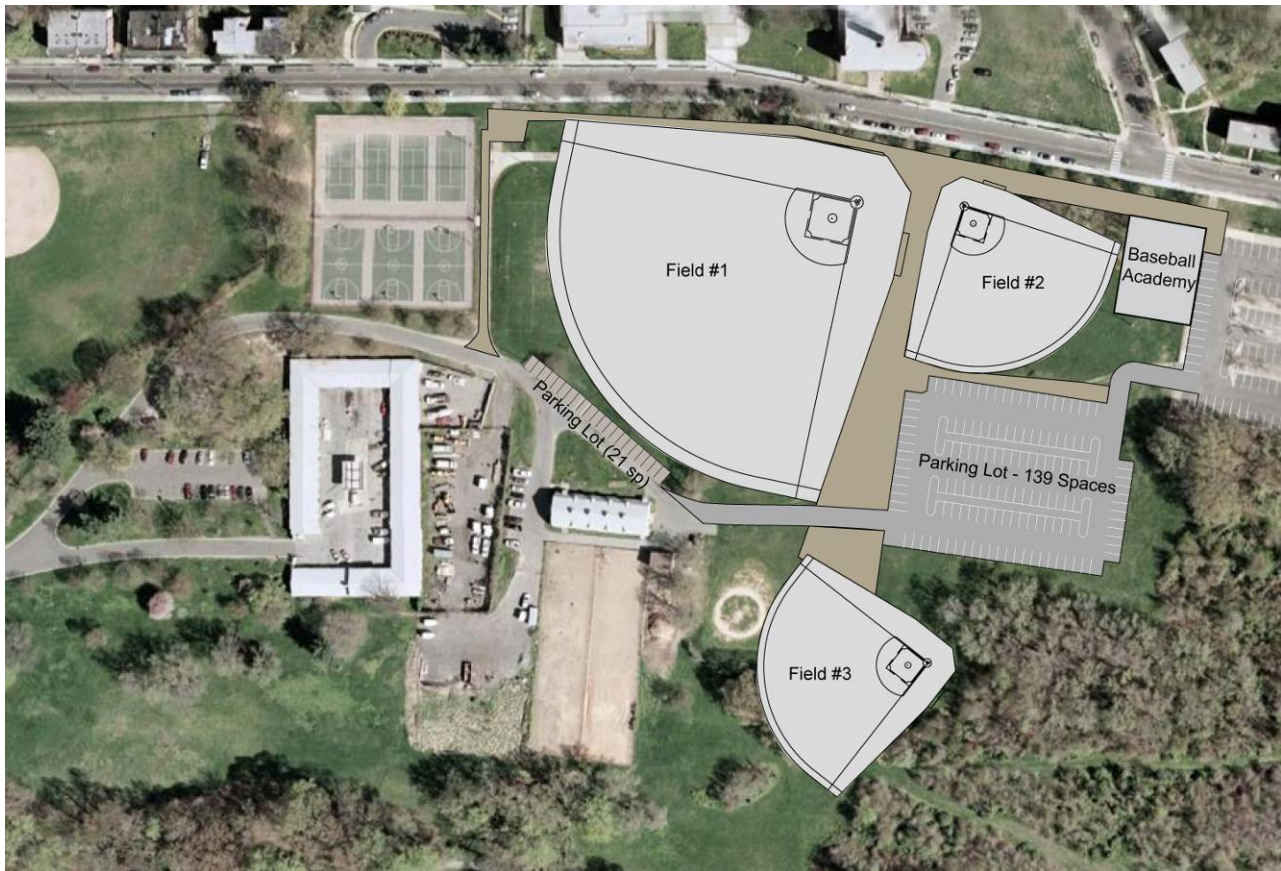
Youth Baseball Academy - Option A: The baseball fields would be configured back-to-back, with a high net or alternative protective surface placed on the backstops to minimize the disruption of play due to ball interference. A walkway would connect the three fields to the Baseball Academy administration building and the parking areas. The walkway is wide enough to accommodate circulation and seating for spectators. Trees could be planted along its length to provide shade for the spectators and as break the visual mass of the length of the walkway. Both the walkway and parking lot could be constructed out of a pervious paving surface. In Option A, the horse lunge would be relocated approximately 100 feet from its current location to the south. The proposed site design under alternative 2, Option A (see Figure 9) could provide a parking for up to 147 spaces to the east of the existing ball courts accessible off the current alignment of F Street SE.

Figure 9: Alternative 2 Option A



Youth Baseball Academy - Option B: The regulation hardball and softball fields would be configured back-to-back with a high net or alternative protective surface placed on the backstops to minimize the disruption of play due to ball interference. A walkway and plaza would connect these two fields to the Baseball Academy administration building and the parking areas. The walkway would be wide enough to accommodate circulation and seating for spectators. In Option B, the horse lunge would remain in its current location. Alternative 2, Option B provides two parking areas. The larger parking lot with 139 spaces would be located to the southeast of the site between the two softball fields, and would be accessed from the existing ice rink parking area and from terminus of F Street SE. There would be a smaller, parking area for 21 vehicles that follows the current alignment of F Street SE (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Alternative 2 Option B

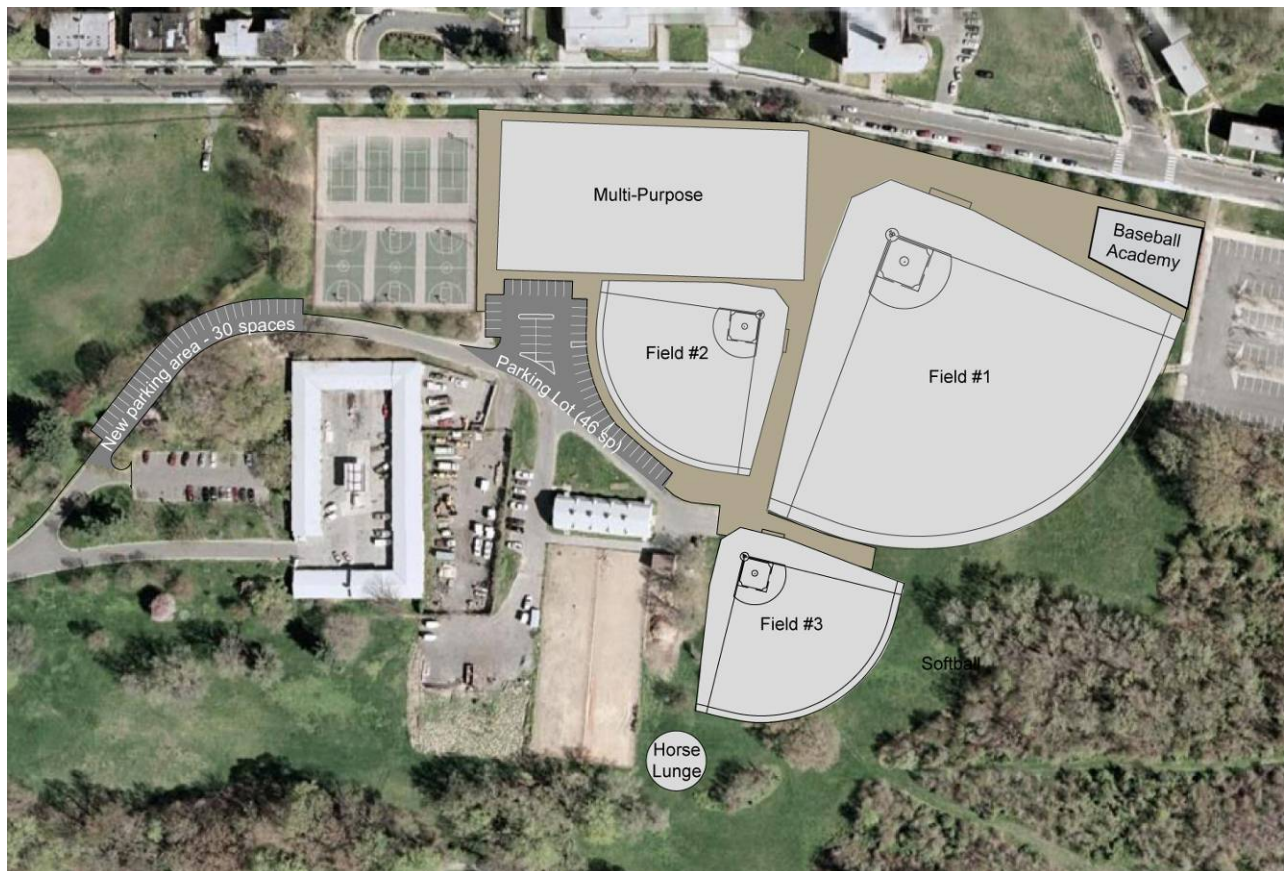


Youth Baseball Academy - Option C: Under alternative 2, Option C The baseball fields would be configured back-to-back with a high net or alternative protective surface placed on the backstops to minimize the disruption of play due to ball interference. A walkway and plaza would connect the three fields to the Baseball Academy administration building and the parking areas. The walkway would be wide enough to accommodate circulation and seating for spectators. In Option C, the horse lunge would be relocated approximately 100-feet from its current location to the south.

Option C would also provide for a multi-purpose field to be included into the overall site design. For planning purposes, the dimensions of the multi-purpose field were assumed to be 360 feet x 175 feet. These dimensions are comparable to an official sized football field and match the size of the current multi-purpose field. The final design of this multi-purpose field would not exceed this size. To account for any potential adjustments in the final site design, the size of this field could be adjusted downward to a point where the functionality of the field is not lost.

There would be two parking lots to support the Baseball Academy and multi-purpose field. The first lot would provide parking for 30 cars and would follow the alignment of F Street SE. The second lot would be located in the center of the site, providing parking for 46 cars. Its configuration would follow the alignment of F Street SE (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: Alternative 2 Option C



CONTINUED USE OF THE EXISTING TENNIS AND BASKETBALL COURTS

There are currently four tennis courts and three basketball courts in a fenced area at the center of the site. No physical changes would occur to the current configuration of the tennis and basketball courts found on-site. Management of these facilities would be transferred from the NPS to the District's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Existing Ball Courts



MITIGATION MEASURES OF THE ACTION ALTERNATIVES

The NPS and the District place a strong emphasis on avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating potentially adverse environmental impacts. Should the transfer of jurisdiction place, the property would be the responsibility of the District and no longer be managed by NPS and no longer a part of Fort Dupont Park, and DC environmental standards would be applied. To help ensure the protection of natural and cultural resources and the quality of the visitor experience, the District would ensure that the following protective measures are implemented as part of either of the action alternatives. During the construction phase of the proposed action alternative, the District would ensure all appropriate regulations would be implemented to assure compliance and to help ensure that protective measures are being properly executed and are achieving their intended results.

Soil and Water Resources

- Pursuant to D.C. Law 2-23 (D.C. Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act of 1977), the District would develop and implement an approved DC Soil Erosion Control Plan prior to any construction associated with the proposed action. The District of Columbia's Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Program regulates all land-disturbing activities to prevent accelerated erosion and transport of sediment to its receiving waters. The program reviews and approves all construction and grading plans submitted to the District of Columbia Government for compliance with the regulations. Plans may call for the use of measures or a combination of measures to reduce the amount of soil washing away from construction sites during storm events, such as:
 - straw bale dikes
 - silt fences
 - brush barriers
 - mulches
 - sediment tanks or temporary sedimentation ponds
 - seeding or sodding
 - earth dikes
 - brickbats
 - stabilized construction entrances
 - vehicle wash racks

Inspections would be conducted at the construction sites to ensure that control devices are constructed in accordance with approved plans. In addition, the program is also responsible for investigating erosion, drainage and related complaints and providing recommendations towards their resolution. The sediment control program complements the water management program, therefore in an effort to meet the goals and objectives of the USEPA Chesapeake Bay Program, the District strengthened its sediment control law by enacting D.C. Law 10-166 (D.C. Erosion and Sedimentation Control Amendment Act of 1994) to specifically remove the exemption provision for sediment control compliance associated with construction activities by federal agencies.

- In accordance with the District of Columbia’s Stormwater Management Guidebook (2001) and 21 D.C. Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Chapter 5 (Sections 526-535: The District of Columbia-Storm Water Management Regulations), stormwater discharge generated on a newly developed site must be equal or below pre-development peak discharge. Prior to construction, a stormwater management plan would be developed for the operation of the proposed new facilities. This plan would address the increase in impervious surfaces and subsequent increases in overland runoff by incorporating stormwater control designs into the project to manage the rate at which runoff leave the site.

Cultural Resources

- If during redevelopment of the parcel, archeological resources are discovered, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery would be halted until the resources could be evaluated and an appropriate mitigation strategy developed, if necessary. This strategy would be developed in consultation with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office, following the procedures for post-review discoveries found in the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s Protection of Historic Properties (36 CFR 800.13). In the more unlikely event that human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are discovered during construction, provisions outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 USC 3001) of 1990 would be followed.

ALTERNATIVES AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD

The Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA require federal agencies explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives to the preferred alternative, and to briefly discuss the rationale for eliminating any alternatives that were not considered in detail. This section describes those alternatives that were eliminated from further study and documents the rationale for their elimination.

During the course of scoping, several alternatives were considered but deemed to be unreasonable and were not carried forward for analysis in this EA. Justification for eliminating these options from further analysis was based on the following factors:

- Technical or economic feasibility.
- Inability to meet project objectives or resolve need.
- Duplication with other, less environmentally damaging or less expensive alternatives.
- Conflict with an up-to-date and valid park plan, statement of purpose and significance, or other policy, such that a major change in the plan or policy would be needed to implement.
- Too great an environmental impact.

The following alternatives were considered but dismissed for the listed reasons.

EXPANSION OF FORT DUPONT ICE ARENA (END TO END CONFIGURATION)

Alternative Description. Under this alternative, the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would be laid out in an end-to-end configuration, which would necessitate the removal of approximately one acre of the adjacent forested area.

Rationale for Rejection: The forested area that would be impacted under this option is designated as a Natural Resource Zone in the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*. NPS uses zoning to provide a framework for decisions about use and development. Areas within the Fort Circle Parks are zoned according to their specific management emphasis. Designated management zones within the Fort Circle Parks include Cultural Resource Zone, Recreation Zone, Natural Resource Zone, Visitor Services Zone, Special Use Zone, and Administrative Zone.

Areas designated as natural resource zones are primarily managed to maintain forests and natural scenery, but they may also contain cultural resources. Such areas might be stream valleys, woods, prominent forest corridors, and other sensitive natural areas not included in the cultural resource zone. The area proposed for the expansion of the ice arena is part of one of the largest remnants of intact coastal plain forest in the District of Columbia (Fleming, nd). The ancient deposition of gravel terraces and the resulting soil conditions in this area have given rise to a unique forest ecosystem referred to as the “Terrace Gravel Forest Plan Community” (Simmons, 2007).

Within the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan* it does state that while the tolerance for resource degradation in this zone is low, resources within this zone can be minimally modified for visitor needs (such as trail improvements) or for visitor safety, but only after careful review of alternatives consistent with the environmental compliance process.

In addition, as stated in the District’s 2006 Comprehensive Plan (Policy PROS-3.1.5: Fort Circle Parks) Fort Circle Parks will be managed “... as an integrated network of permanent open spaces that connect neighborhoods, provide scenic beauty and historic interest, and offer a variety of recreational activities. Recognize these parks as an important city and national resource. Prevent District and federal actions that would harm historic and ecological resources in the Fort Circle Parks, and strongly support actions that would improve their maintenance, connectivity, visibility, accessibility, and safety.”

Because of the potential loss of up to one acre coastal plain forest, the fact that the proposed expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would require a change in management strategies outlined in the Fort Circle Management Plan, and that policy within the District’s Comprehensive Plan calls for the protection of Fort Circle’s historic and ecological resources, this option was dismissed from further consideration and this portion of land is not being transferred.

INCLUSION OF THE KIMBALL SCHOOL BASEBALL FIELDS INTO THE BASEBALL ACADEMY’S PROGRAMMING

Alternative Description. Under this alternative, the baseball fields located at the Kimball School, directly east of the project area, would be incorporated into the proposed baseball academy’s programming.

Rationale for Rejection: The baseball fields located at the Kimball School are managed and maintained by DPR, and are open to the public. Currently these fields are primarily utilized by “Field of Dreams,” an after-school and summer enrichment program that helps inner city children develop athletic skills and teaches them how to excel in academics. Due to permitting requirements and differences in programming between “Field of Dreams” and the proposed Youth Baseball Academy, utilization of these fields by both organizations would diminish the effectiveness of both programs. As a result, this option was dismissed from further consideration.

TWO BASEBALL/SOFTBALL FIELDS, ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING, AND A MULTI-PURPOSE SPORTS FIELD

Alternative Description: This alternative would include a multi-purpose sports field (i.e., soccer and football with a dimension of 330 feet by 150 feet), expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena, a regulation-sized baseball field, a softball field, an administrative building, and required parking. In addition, the basketball and tennis courts currently on site would also be conveyed to the District, and remain unchanged.

Rationale for Rejection: This alternative was rejected because two baseball/softball fields would not be sufficient to meet the expected programming requirements of the Youth Baseball Academy and would diminish the effectiveness of the program.

THE ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The environmentally preferred alternative is defined by CEQ as the alternative that would promote the national environmental policy as expressed in Section 101 of the NEPA. This includes:

1. Fulfilling the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
2. Assuring for all generations safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
3. Attaining the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
4. Preserving important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintaining, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
5. Achieving a balance between population and resource use that would permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
6. Enhancing the quality of renewable resources and approaching the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources (NEPA, Section 101).

Simply put, this means that the environmentally preferred alternative is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment; it also means it is the alternative that best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources.

After completing the environmental analysis, the NPS and the District identified alternative 2, the preferred alternative, as the environmentally preferred alternative in this EA. While both alternatives equally protect the forested area adjacent to the project area (designated as a Natural Zone in the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*) from development, alternative 2 most closely satisfies the policy goals detailed above. By transferring the jurisdiction of the Project Area from the NPS to the District and thus allowing for the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and the establishment of a Youth Baseball Academy, alternative 2 provides the visitors and the community with improved and more structured recreational opportunities than the no action alternative. Alternative 2 provides a wider range of beneficial uses and achieves a greater balance between population and resource use than the no action alternative, without any greater risk of resource degradation, health and safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences. In addition, while meeting the programming requirements of both the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and the Youth Baseball Academy, alternative 2 improves and expands the opportunities for providing organized community activities; and provides safe and healthful accommodations with more aesthetically pleasing surroundings that are conducive to the educational goals of the different programs.

The no action alternative does not meet the criteria for the environmentally preferred alternative as fully as alternative 2. Under the no action, managerial responsibilities of the Project Area would remain with the NPS, and as a result, the current recreational facilities would remain unchanged. The park would continue to provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities (i.e., baseball field, multi-purpose field, basketball and tennis courts, and the Fort Dupont Ice Arena); however, the current baseball and multi-purpose fields would not be improved. The Fort Dupont Ice arena would continue to be leased from the NPS and would operate at its current capacity, and because of the current high demand for the ice arena, would not be able serve everyone wishing to use the facility. Under the no action alternative there would be no additional benefits to the site or the community.

A summary of the environmental consequences follows in Table 1.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Impact Topic	Alternative A: No Action Alternative	Alternative 2
Physiographic Resources	Implementation of the no action alternative would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to soils due to continued compaction of soils occurring in the existing recreational fields. There would be no impacts to topography or geology under this alternative. There would be no adverse or beneficial cumulative impacts related to physiographic resources. There would be no impairment of these resources under this alternative.	Implementation of any of the options presented under alternative 2 would result in short-term and long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to soils from the increased potential for erosion, compaction, loss of productivity, and disturbance of soils resulting from construction and recreational activities. Long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to topography would occur near the southern end of the project area. No impacts to geology would result from implementation of this alternative. There would be no adverse or beneficial cumulative impacts to geologic resources associated with this alternative. There would be no impairment of physiographic resources under alternative 2.
Visitor Use and Experience	Implementation of the no action alternative would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to visitor use and experience from the lack of facilities, amenities, and opportunities for recreational programs, particularly for children and young adults. Long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts would occur under the no action alternative.	Implementation of alternative 2 would result in short-term moderate adverse impacts to visitor use and experience during the construction of the fields and other recreational facilities. There is no multi-purpose sports field included under either of the Youth Baseball Academy's Option A or B, which would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to those who currently utilize that field. However, with the inclusion and improvements to the multi-purpose sports field under Option C, there would be long-term beneficial impacts to those who utilize that field. Overall, there would also be long-term beneficial impacts to those who would utilize the Youth Baseball Academy and expanded ice arena facilities. Alternative 2 would result in long-term beneficial cumulative impacts.

Impact Topic	Alternative A: No Action Alternative	Alternative 2
Socioeconomics	Implementation of the no action alternative would result in some long-term beneficial impacts as the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would remain open at its current capacity. However, long-term minor adverse impacts to socioeconomics would occur because the current programming and facilities of the ice arena cannot accommodate everyone who seeks to use them. Overall, there would be long-term beneficial cumulative impacts associated with the no action alternative.	Implementation of alternative 2 would result in long-term beneficial impacts to the local community and economy as recreational facilities would be improved and expanded. The increased availability of organized recreational opportunities may lead to a decrease in juvenile crime in the area. In addition, the local economy may benefit with the potential increase in local property values and the small increase in local employment. The improved and expanded facilities may also have long-term beneficial cumulative impacts on the crime rate, employment, and housing values of the surrounding communities.
Park Operations and Management	Implementation of the no action alternative would result in no direct or cumulative impacts to park operations and management. The NPS would continue its current management of the Park and the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would continue to be operated under its current lease agreement by the Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena at its current capacity. No cumulative impacts would occur.	Implementation of alternative 2 would have long-term beneficial impacts on NPS park operations and management as NPS personnel and resources could be allocated to other NPS units. Under Options A and C, there would be short-term minor and long-term negligible adverse impacts to the USPP, as the horse lunge is relocated approximately 100 feet. With increased management responsibilities, there would be long-term minor adverse impacts on the overall operations and management of the District, Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena, and the Washington Nationals, as personnel and resources would be reallocated to provide support of the proposed new facilities. In addition, there would be long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts to the District's operation and management and long-term beneficial impacts to NPS operations and management.

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AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter of the EA describes existing environmental conditions in the areas potentially affected by the alternatives evaluated. This section describes the following resource areas: physiographic resources, visitor use and experience, socioeconomics (Park neighbors), and park management and operations. Potential impacts are discussed in the “Environmental Consequences” section following the same order.

PHYSIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES (GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY, AND SOILS)

Fort Dupont Park is located in an area along the edge of the Atlantic Coastal Plain physiographic province. Geologic formations in this province are characterized by layers of unconsolidated sedimentary sands, silts, and clays, which resulted from the erosion of mountains in the Piedmont physiographic province, located just west of the fall line. These sedimentary deposits are approximately 800 feet thick and are underlain by igneous and metamorphic rocks (DCWRRC, 1994). Most of the sedimentary deposits in the Park belong to the Potomac Group and were deposited in the Pleistocene epoch. Within the Potomac Group, the oldest unit is the Patuxent Formation, which is composed mainly of cross-bedded angular sands and quartz gravels. The Arundel Clay Formation most likely lies on top of the Patuxent Formation; contains iron-rich, stiff fractured clays; and is estimated to be approximately 60 to 70 feet thick (Fleming, nd). The Calvert Formation, which contains fine-grained sand and sandy clay, prominent shell beds, and locally silica-cemented sandstones, tops some of the uplands in the Park and is typically 20 to 80 feet thick (DCWRRC, 1994).

The topography within Fort Dupont Park varies from nearly level along the northern boundary of the Park adjacent to Ely Place, to steeply sloping ravines in the central and southern areas of the Park. These ravines carry an unnamed stream from the Fort Dupont site in the southeastern corner of the Park through the center of the Park, and eventually off the property to the west where the stream enters the Anacostia River. In the project area, topography generally slopes from east to west. The existing Fort Dupont Ice Arena sits at an elevation of approximately 150 feet above sea level. The area south of the arena is a forested area containing slopes that range from approximately seven percent to 25 percent. The area proposed for the baseball facilities slopes from east to west and ranges in elevation from 120 feet to 98 feet. Slopes in this area are gentle, as the site has been previously graded to accommodate existing outdoor recreational uses (DC Office of Planning, 2008).

The predominant soil types found in the project area are Muirkirk variant complex and Christiana silt loam. The Muirkirk series are deep, well-drained soils typically found on uplands in the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Three different slope categories within the Muirkirk soils are found on the site and range from zero to 40 percent slopes. The Muirkirk soils are not considered to be hydric in nature. They are not highly erodible and their shrink-swell potential is moderate. The Christiana series are very deep, well-drained soils found on uplands within the coastal plan. Slopes within the Christiana silt loam range from eight to 15 percent. The Christiana soil series is moderately erodible and has a moderate shrink-swell potential (NRCS, 2008).

VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE

According to NPS Visitation Database Reports, annual visitation to the parks administered by National Capital Parks-East (NCP-East) has averaged approximately 1.3 million visitors annually over the past 5 years (Table 2). In 2007, total annual visitation was 1,311,087 persons, with the heaviest visitation in the late summer months (NPS 2008b).

TABLE 2. NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS EAST VISITATION

Year	Recreational Visitors
2007	1,311,087
2006	1,310,321
2005	1,390,443
2004	1,998,903
2003	1,372,109

NPS 2008b

Fort Dupont Park visitation numbers reflect the visitation fluctuations for the NCP-East as a whole. For example, typical recreational visitation for May 2007 was an estimated 136,642, while the number for May 2008 was 123,575. Table 3 shows the decline in visitation and percent change from year to year. Park visitation has been heaviest between May and November, with the highest monthly visitation occurring in July. The next highest monthly visitations occur during June and August. Visitation is concentrated more heavily on the weekends.

TABLE 3. FORT DUPONT PARK VISITATION REPORT

	May 2008	Same Month Last Year	Percent Change	This Year YTD	Last Year YTD	Percent Change YTD
Recreation Visits						
Fort Dupont	33,150	35,625	- 6.9	123,575	136,642	- 9.6
Nonrecreation Visits						
Fort Dupont	200,880	218,701	- 8.1	806,760	900,839	- 10.4
Total Visits	234,030	255,326	- 7.5	930,335	1,037,481	- 10.0

NPS 2008b

Fort Dupont Park provides a diverse range of easily accessible visitor and recreation opportunities in close proximity to downtown Washington, D.C. Picnics, nature walks, Civil War programs, gardening, environmental education, music and theater, skating, sports, and youth programs are among the varied seasonal activities possible at this spacious area east of the Anacostia River. The grounds of Fort Dupont Park are open all year from dawn to dusk. Access to the Park by vehicle is via Ridge Road SE, Alabama Ave. SE, and Massachusetts Ave. SE. The Summer Theatre entrance is on Minnesota Avenue between Benning Road and Pennsylvania Avenue. Ely Place SE, along which the ice arena, ballfields, and other

sports facilities are located, is also a vehicle entrance point. As mentioned previously, the Fort Circle Parks Hiker-Biker Trail crosses Fort Dupont nearly halfway in the trail's approximate 7-mile course. Fort Dupont Park also has various other foot trails that traverse woodlands, meadows and cross park streams.

Many visitors are Park neighbors, who access the Park from their property or neighboring public areas. The majority of visitors to the Park are considered non-recreational visitors, such as commuters, employees, vendors, and others². As seen in Table 3, about 16 percent of the visitors are recreational³. Recreational facilities include ballfields, tennis and basketball courts, picnicking areas, ice skating, and hiking and biking trails. The three picnic areas are available for reserved use by groups between May and September. The neighborhood residents use the Park to walk dogs, ride bicycles, visit playgrounds, and other outdoor activities.

Fort Dupont Park has the only full-size indoor ice arena in Washington, D.C., and serves over 10,000 visitors a year. Due to increasing demand, the current facility has a waiting list for many of its programs. The rink also provides limited space for additional off-ice programming such as birthday parties, exercise and warm up space for figure and speed skaters, and office space.

The baseball fields along Ely Place are used several weekends a month, especially during the summer and fall months. The fields at Kimball are utilized in the afternoons during the school year by Field of Dreams. Field of Dreams currently serves young/elementary school-aged children at that location. Other local leagues use the baseball fields in the evenings starting at 5:00 p.m. and on weekends through DPR permitting. A youth flag football league uses the multi-purpose field on weekday evenings and Saturdays in the fall, and an adult flag football league (totaling 400 to 500 players) uses the field and the area next to the field on Sundays in the spring, summer, and fall. In addition, the Boys and Girls Club uses the fields occasionally for practices in the fall. Most of the year, however, this multi-purpose field is under-utilized, possibly because it is in poor condition. The adult football league is currently using volunteers to improve the condition of the field, such as filling in holes with soil, and planting grass. Most of these activities are permitted through National Capital Parks-East, although some private groups hold events without seeking a permit (Gross 2008).

The basketball and tennis courts are mainly used by local residents; however, the Sousa Middle School has sought special permits from National Capital Parks - East for a summer tennis and basketball program in the past. Thurgood Marshall Academy also organizes youth sports programs on the tennis courts and ball fields on occasion (Gross 2008).

² The number of non-recreation vehicles entering Fort Dupont is estimated as 130,000 per month. To get the number of non-recreational visitors, the number of non-recreation vehicles is multiplied by the person per vehicle multiplier of 1.2 (NPS 2008b).

³ The number of recreational visitors is estimated by reducing the number of non-recreation vehicles and by estimating the number of visitors at non-reserved and reserved picnic sites, bike trails, ice rink, fort site, ball fields, day camp, gardens, and Summer Theater (NPS 2008).

SOCIOECONOMICS

Fort Dupont Park is located in the southeast quadrant of the District, which had a population in 2000 of 572,059, and an average population density of 9,471 people per square mile. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there has been a slight increase in the population of the District from 2000 to 2007, with the estimated population in 2007 of 588,292 residents (U.S. Census 2000).

The population of the District in 2000 was classified as 30.8 percent Caucasian (176,101 residents); 60.0 percent Black or African-American (343,312 residents); less than one percent American Indian or Alaskan (1,173 residents); 2.7 percent Asian (15,189 residents); less than one percent Some Other Race (385 residents); less than one percent Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (348 residents); and 2.4 percent Two or More Races (13,446 residents). Of the total population of the District, approximately 44,953 residents (7.9 percent) were identified as Hispanic (U.S. Census 2000).

There are seven Census tracts that border or are contained within Fort Dupont Park, as described in Table 4. The racial make-up of the Census tracts ranges from 91 to 98 percent African-American, up to 6.25 percent Caucasian, and up to two percent other races (U.S. Census 2000).

TABLE 4: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CENSUS TRACT DATA ON RACE

Percentage of Population by Race and Ethnicity								
Area	Total Population	Non-Latino White	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two Or More Races	Hispanic or Latino (regardless of race)
District of Columbia	572,059	30.8%	60.0%	0.30%	2.70%	0.10%	2.40%	7.90%
Census Tract 76.04	3,764	3.67%	94.45%	0.27%	0.35%	0.00%	0.50%	0.58%
Census Tract 77.07	3,796	0.61%	97.68%	0.29%	0.21%	0.00%	0.03%	0.40%
Census Tract 99.01	2,302	4.00%	93.87%	0.30%	0.00%	0.09%	0.30%	1.35%
Census Tract 99.07	3,037	0.76%	98.45%	0.03%	0.07%	0.03%	0.33%	0.82%
Census Tract 8024.03	5,853	5.09%	91.41%	0.10%	0.91%	0.03%	0.84%	1.55%
Census Tract 8025.01	3,541	3.39%	94.10%	0.62%	0.34%	0.00%	0.31%	1.02%
Census Tract 8027	2,669	6.26%	91.05%	0.45%	0.41%	0.00%	0.49%	0.86%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Ages of population in the Census tracts are shown in Table 5. Within the seven Census tracts, there are a total of 5,045 children between the ages of 5 and 17 years old (U.S. Census 2000). This segment of the population is most pertinent to the proposed action as the action involves the construction of baseball fields and the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena in the designated area.

TABLE 5: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CENSUS TRACT DATA ON AGE

Area	Age of Population								Total
	Under 5 years	5 through 17 years	18 through 21 years	22 through 34 years	35 through 49 years	50 through 64 years	65 through 79 years	80 years and over	
Census Tract 76.04	228	613	161	610	629	739	394	90	3,764
Census Tract 77.07	300	742	178	577	812	532	530	123	3,796
Census Tract 99.01	76	261	57	259	503	565	472	109	2,302
Census Tract 99.07	336	863	171	519	546	305	237	60	3,037
Census Tract 8024.03	430	1,004	293	1,505	1,460	770	313	78	5,853
Census Tract 8025.01	261	990	181	727	890	550	183	29	3,541
Census Tract 8027	172	572	131	711	622	471	255	54	2,669
Total	1803	5045	1172	4908	5462	3932	2384	543	24,962

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Economy

The District experienced positive economic growth between 2000 and 2006, with employment increasing by 3.2 percent during that period. The largest industries in the District in 2000 based on percentage of employment include Professional and Scientific Services (19 percent), Educational and Health Services (18 percent), and Public Administration (15 percent) (U.S. Census 2000). In 2006, the unemployment rate in the District of Columbia was 8.5 percent, which was above the national average of 6.4 percent.

The median household income in the District, as measured by the 2000 U.S. Census, was \$40,127 (U.S. Census 2000). This was well below median household income for the bordering states of Maryland and Virginia (\$65,144 and \$56,277, respectively). However, consistent with statistics on poverty levels, median household income in six of the seven Census tracts ranging from \$20,176 to \$40,346 was slightly lower than the rest of the District. The one exception was Tract 99.01, which had a much higher median household income of \$61,174 compared to the District, which had a median household income of \$40,127. Table 6 shows the Census tract data on income.

TABLE 6: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND SURROUNDING AREAS CENSUS TRACT DATA ON INCOME

Area	Median household income in 1999
District of Columbia	\$40,127.00
Census Tract 76.04	\$35,811.00
Census Tract 77.07	\$33,592.00
Census Tract 99.01	\$61,174.00
Census Tract 99.07	\$20,176.00
Census Tract 8024.03	\$36,344.00
Census Tract 8025.01	\$40,346.00
Census Tract 8027	\$38,958.00

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Table 7 shows the percentage of individuals considered living below the poverty standard for the District and relevant Census Block Groups in the study area. Poverty levels, taken from the 2000 U.S. Census, are used as a proxy to identify potential low income populations. Many tracts within the study area and the District show significantly higher percentages of individuals considered living in poverty than in the United States as a whole. The District had a poverty rate of 20.22 percent in 2000, which is considered a significant portion of the population. Census Tract 99.07 had a poverty rate of 42.5 percent, which shows that a considerable portion of the population in that tract is living below the poverty line.

TABLE 7. POVERTY STATISTICS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND CENSUS BLOCKS GROUPS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

Area	Total	Residents with Income in 1999 Below the Poverty Level	Percentage of the Population Below the Poverty Level
United States	273,882,232	33,899,812	12.38 percent
District of Columbia	541,657	109,500	20.22 percent
Census Tract 76.04	3,755	549	14.62 percent
Census Tract 77.07	3,753	746	19.88 percent
Census Tract 99.01	2,300	151	6.57 percent
Census Tract 99.07	3,092	1,314	42.50 percent
Census Tract 8024.03	5,858	737	12.58 percent
Census Tract 8025.01	3,590	272	7.58 percent
Census Tract 8027	2,730	280	10.26 percent

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Housing

Although there is substantial variation in household income and home values, the majority of these selected Census tracts show household income and home values below the average for the District. The average median value of owner-occupied units in the Census tracts adjacent to Fort Dupont Park was approximately \$128,000 in 2000, less than the average for the District as a whole, which was \$157,200. Average median household income in the District was approximately \$40,127 in 2000.

Housing characteristics in 2008 for the District include 274,845 housing units, of which 9.6 percent were vacant (U.S. Census 2000). Of these units, 39 percent were single-family residents, and 61 percent were multi-family units. The median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners was \$313, and for renters \$618.

District of Columbia Crime Statistics

The project area is located in Ward 7, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Sixth District of the Metropolitan Police Department. District 6 consists of a mix of single-family detached and row houses, along with a significant number of public housing projects. District 6 is home to both Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens and Fort Dupont Park, which is patrolled by the Metropolitan Police Department and the USPP.

The neighborhood in which Fort Dupont Park and the project area are located has a history of crime ranging from homicide to arson. As shown in Table 8, the crime rate dropped 17.4 percent from 2003 to 2004 and then 12.4 percent from 2004 to 2005. The most common form of crime in the area in 2005 was stolen automobiles (1,629 cases), followed closely by larceny and theft (1,046 cases).

TABLE 8: SIXTH DISTRICT CRIME STATISTICS ANNUAL TOTALS: 2001-2005

Crime	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Homicide	50	62	64	52	37
Sexual Assault	40	47	63	55	39
Robbery	560	513	505	473	503
Aggravated Assault	910	867	701	656	753
Burglary	577	573	548	423	375
Larceny/Theft	1,722	1,791	1,504	1,186	1,046
Stolen Auto	1,539	1,837	2,671	2,171	1,629
Arson	15	17	26	7	16
Total	5,413	5,707	6,082	5,023	4,398
Percent Change from the Previous Year	N/A	-5.40 percent	+6.6 percent	-17.40 percent	-12.40 percent

Source: Metropolitan Police Department 2008

PARK OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

National Capital Parks-East is made up of 13 Park units, including Fort Dupont Park; parkways; and statuary covering more than 8,000 acres of historic, cultural, and recreational parklands from Capitol Hill to the nearby Maryland suburbs. NCP-East is responsible for providing staff to perform all of the day-to-day operations and maintenance required to manage and maintain the facilities at Fort Dupont Park. Within Fort Dupont Park, NPS interpretive rangers and maintenance staff are on hand to manage and maintain the grounds and its recreational facilities, which include the multi-purpose field, tennis and basketball courts, and baseball diamond. Currently, maintenance responsibilities at Fort Dupont Park include general maintenance of the parking lots and buildings, garbage removal, and mowing of lawns and fields. Adjacent to the project area, the Park also houses the National Capital Parks-East maintenance complex and one of the United States Park Police stables (NPS 2004).

There are three picnic areas within the Park available for reserved use by groups between May and September. Group picnic reservations are managed through the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation. Permit applications and guidelines for special events are available through the park programs office in the National Capital Region of the NPS (NPS 2006b).

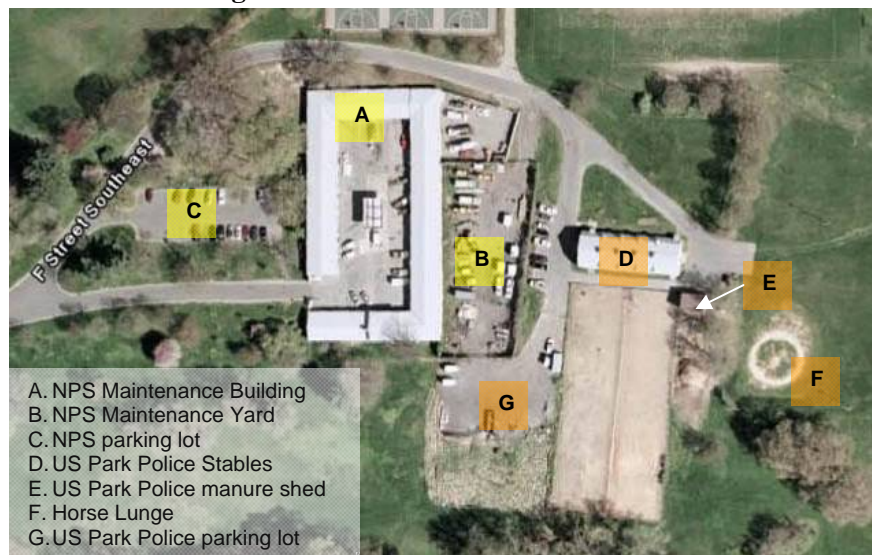
The Fort Dupont Ice Arena is managed through a lease agreement with Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena, Inc., a nonprofit organization formed to manage and revitalize the Fort Dupont Ice Arena located in the Park. The group has initiated and overseen major repairs, including a new addition to house offices and an educational meeting room complete with eight computer workstations, a refurbished lobby and snack stand, and an expanded skate shop. In addition to bricks and mortar support, Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena created the Kids on Ice program, which provides free figure skating, hockey, and speed skating lessons to economically disadvantaged children who might not otherwise have the opportunity to learn these sports (FDIA 2008a).

NPS and USPP Facilities

The NPS and USPP facilities are located adjacent to the southwestern part of the Project Area. The NPS facilities include a 41,000 gsf maintenance building, 0.6 acre maintenance yard located immediately to the east, and parking lot located to the west (See Figure 11) and supports the NPS motor pool, service vehicles, and equipment used for NPS facilities in the NCP-East jurisdiction.

The USPP facilities are located to the southeast of the NPS facilities and share a common access road (F Street SE). The USPP stable is a 4,175 sf facility that houses the mounted police fleet of horses that support the Anacostia Park. There are several other elements that support the USPP stables. There is a small manure shed to the southeast of the USPP stables that is accessed by USPP vehicles from the terminus of F Street SE. The turn around allows vehicles to turn around and back into the manure shed. There is a parking lot for USPP staff to the south of the stables. Finally, there is a horse lunge to the east of the stables that is used to train and exercise the horses. Typically, a horse lunge is a small enclosed circle, at least 60 feet in diameter.

Figure 11: USPP and NPS Facilities



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

GENERAL METHODOLOGY FOR ESTABLISHING IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND MEASURING EFFECTS

This chapter addresses the potential impacts to each of the impact topics discussed under the “Affected Environment” chapter for each of the alternatives. The action alternatives are compared to the no action alternative, or baseline condition of the project area within Fort Dupont Park, to determine impacts to resource topics. In the absence of quantitative data, best professional judgment was used. In general, effects were determined through consultation and collaboration with a multidisciplinary team of NPS, the District, and other professional staff. Regulatory agency consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DC HPO), and other existing data sources such as park planning documents and the NCP-East website were also used to assess the potential impact of each alternative.

Potential impacts of all alternatives are described in terms of type (beneficial or adverse); context; duration (short- or long-term); and intensity (negligible, minor, moderate, major). Definitions of these descriptors include:

Beneficial: A positive change in the condition or appearance of the resource or a change that moves the resource toward a desired condition.

Adverse: A change that declines, degrades, and/or moves the resource away from a desired condition or detracts from its appearance or condition.

Context: Context is the affected environment within which an impact would occur, such as local, park-wide, regional, global, affected interests, society as whole, or any combination of these. Context is variable and depends on the circumstances involved with each impact topic. As such, the impact analysis determines the context, not vice versa.

Duration: The duration of the impact is described as short-term or long-term. Duration is variable with each impact topic; therefore, definitions related to each impact topic are provided in the specific impact analysis narrative.

Intensity: Because definitions of impact intensity (negligible, minor, moderate, and major) vary by impact topic, intensity definitions are provided separately for each impact topic analyzed.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

NEPA regulations require an assessment of cumulative impacts in the decision-making process for federal projects. Cumulative impacts are defined as “the impact on the environment that results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other actions” (40 CFR 1508.7). Cumulative effects can result from individually minor, but collectively moderate or major actions that take place over a period of time.

Cumulative impacts are considered for all alternatives, including the no action alternative. Cumulative impacts were determined by combining the impacts of the alternative being considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. The following actions and plans were identified as having the potential for impacts to the resources that are evaluated in this environmental assessment. No past projects were considered applicable.

Anacostia Riverwalk Trail. A major component developed in the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative Framework Plan is a comprehensive trail system, including bicycle and pedestrian trails along the Anacostia River. This system of trails, if built, would total approximately 48 miles in length. The Anacostia Riverwalk would also provide interconnectivity between the Bladensburg Trail in Maryland; the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens; Anacostia Park on the east side of the river; Robert F. Kennedy

Memorial Stadium (RFK) and the Washington Naval Yard on the west side; and several neighborhoods, intersecting bridges, and main roads (DDOT 2005).

Kenilworth Avenue Corridor Transportation Study. Kenilworth Avenue is a major highway providing a link between I-395, I-295, and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. It serves as an important commuter route, carrying over 100,000 vehicles daily between Maryland and Washington, D.C. The Kenilworth Avenue Corridor Study is the third major transportation study by the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) that looks at transportation improvements for the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative area. This study examines the section of Kenilworth Avenue between Pennsylvania Avenue and Eastern Avenue with three goals in mind:

- Providing a safer, more pedestrian friendly, atmosphere;
- Creating a more urban setting for Kenilworth Avenue; and
- Improving access for local neighborhoods.

The purpose of this project is to improve the safety and accessibility of Kenilworth Avenue for the neighboring communities. This project will develop recommendations to transform Kenilworth Avenue into an urban roadway that is more pedestrian friendly and more accessible for the adjoining communities and neighborhoods. The study will address issues related to access; safety; and transportation for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit use (DDOT 2006).

Poplar Point Redevelopment Project and Proposed National Park Service and U.S. Park Police Facilities Relocation: The D.C. Lands Act calls for the redevelopment of Poplar Point (the Site) by the District. Should the NPS and the District jointly determine that it is no longer appropriate for the NPS and U.S. Park Police (USPP), which is part of the NPS, to remain in their current Poplar Point facilities, new permanent replacement facilities will be provided by the District. An EIS is analyzing alternatives for the District's redevelopment of the Site and for NPS and USPP replacement facilities that may be located elsewhere in Washington, D.C., in addition to a no action alternative. Poplar Point is approximately 130 acres, mostly under NPS jurisdiction, containing the NPS and USPP facilities and 60 acres of managed meadows. The Site will increase to approximately 150 acres when the Frederick Douglass Bridge is realigned further to the South; the District already has jurisdiction of the land underneath the freeway infrastructure leading to that bridge. The Site also contains the Anacostia Metro Station and a Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) parking garage; however these assets are not a part of the proposed conveyance. The NPS and USPP currently operate in approximately 100,000 square feet of facilities at the Site. The NPS and USPP relocation involves the NPS and the District agreeing on a new location and on facilities design, followed by the District providing such facilities to the NPS at no cost. Options for relocation include moving to other land in the District, or relocation at the Site. A determination could also be made for the NPS and USPP to remain in their current facilities (NPS 2008).

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Headquarters Consolidation at St. Elizabeth's West Campus Master Plan: St. Elizabeth's West Campus is a 176- acre property located in the southeast quadrant of D.C. and is bounded by Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd to the east, I-295 to the west, Barry Farm to the north, and Shepherd Parkway to the south. The property is owned by the U.S. government and is under the administrative jurisdiction of the General Services Administration (GSA). The campus is a National Historic Landmark. Constructed between the 1850s and the 1960s, St. Elizabeth's West Campus contains 61 buildings totaling approximately 1.1 million gross square feet (gsf) of space. The GSA is currently developing a Master Plan proposal for the campus to guide the redevelopment of approximately 4.5 million gsf into a secure federal campus for elements of the DHS, including the United States Coast Guard. The redevelopment will be distributed to existing historic buildings and to new construction on the campus together with 5,307 parking spaces. The campus will provide a single functional campus to facilitate communication, coordination and cooperation across the most critical components of the DHS (GSA 2008). This plan is still in the proposal stage.

IMPAIRMENT ANALYSIS

The NPS 2006 *Management Policies* (NPS 2006) require an analysis of potential effects to determine whether or not actions would impact park resources, but also to determine whether those actions would impair park resources. The fundamental purpose of the National Park System as established by the Organic Act and reaffirmed by the General Authorities Act, as amended, begins with a mandate to conserve park resources and values. These laws give the NPS the management discretion to allow impacts to park resources and values (when necessary and appropriate) to fulfill the purposes of a park, as long as the impact does not constitute impairment of the affected resources and values. NPS managers must always seek ways to avoid or minimize to the greatest degree practicable, adversely impacting park resources and values.

The impairment prohibited by the Organic Act and the General Authorities Act is an impact, in the professional judgment of the responsible NPS manager, that harms the integrity of park resources or values, including the opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. Whether an impact meets this definition depends on the particular resources and values that would be affected; the severity, duration, and timing of the impact; the direct and indirect effects of the impact; and the cumulative effects of the impact in question and other impacts. An impact to any park resource or value may constitute impairment, but an impact would be more likely to constitute an impairment to the extent that it has a major or severe adverse effect upon a resource or value whose conservation is:

- necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park;
- key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or
- identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents.

Impairment may result from NPS activities in managing the park, visitor activities, or activities undertaken by contractors, and others operating in the park. An impairment determination is included in the conclusion statement for all impact topics related to all Fort Dupont Park natural resources (soils, surface waters, vegetation, cultural landscapes, and historic structures). Impairment determinations are not made for visitor use and enjoyment, health and safety, socioeconomics, or park operations and management, because impairment findings relate back to park resources and values and these impact areas are not generally considered to be park resources or values. Impairment determinations are not made for visitor use and experience because, according to the Organic Act, enjoyment cannot be impaired in the same way an action can impair park resources and values.

PHYSIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES (GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY, AND SOILS)

Methodology and Assumptions

Potential impacts to physiographic resources are assessed based on the extent of disturbance to natural geologic and topographic resources, natural undisturbed soils, the potential for soil erosion resulting from disturbance, and limitations associated with the soils. Analysis of possible impacts to geologic resources was based on on-site inspection of the resource within the project area, review of existing literature and maps, and information provided by the NPS and other agencies.

Study Area

The geographic study area for geologic resources is contained within the boundaries of the Project Area. It is expected that construction/expansion activities would not occur outside this area.

Impact Thresholds

The following thresholds were used to determine the magnitude of impacts on geologic resources:

Negligible – Physiographic resources would not be impacted or the impact would be below or at the lower levels of detection. Any impacts to geology, topography, and soils would be slight.

Minor – Impacts to physiographic resources would be detectable. Impacts to undisturbed areas would be small. Mitigation would be needed to offset adverse impacts and would be relatively simple to implement and would likely be successful.

Moderate – Impacts to physiographic resources would be readily apparent and result in a change to the soil, topographic, and geologic character over a relatively wide area. Mitigation measures would be necessary to offset adverse impacts and would likely be successful.

Major – Impacts to physiographic resources would be readily apparent and substantially change the character of the geology, topography, and soils over a large area both in and out of the Park. Mitigation measures necessary to offset adverse impacts would be needed, extensive, and their success would not be guaranteed.

Duration – Short-term impacts occur during the implementation of the alternative; long-term impacts extend beyond implementation of the alternative.

Impacts of Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative

Analysis. Under the no action alternative, the Project Area containing the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and other recreational facilities would remain unchanged. The existing ice arena parking lot would continue to be used, and there would be no modification or expansion of any of the recreational facilities that would necessitate ground disturbance. Under the no action alternative, there would be no modification to the topography or geology of the Park. The Project Area would continue to be managed by NPS and no changes to the 2004 *Fort Circle Park Management Plan* would be required.

The no action alternative assumes that current visitor use trends for the recreational facilities currently onsite would continue into the future. The existing recreational fields (one baseball field, one multi-purpose sports field, three basketball courts, and four tennis courts) would continue to be maintained by the NPS in their current condition. Soil compaction would continue to occur on unpaved fields due to their continued use for athletic activities. Compacted soils contribute to reduce water infiltration rates, allowing for greater runoff and increased potential for erosion. Compacted soils can also inhibit seed germination and plant growth, which over the long term decreases the amount of organic material within the soils and decreases overall soil productivity (i.e., the capacity of the soil to produce vegetative biomass). Under this alternative, adverse impacts to soils would be long-term and minor.

Cumulative Impacts. Impacts to physiographic resources are site-specific and are not affected by cumulative development outside the study area. Cumulative impacts would only occur if development immediately within or adjacent to the site directly or indirectly affected the geology, topography, and/or soils of the site. Recent projects in the area of Fort Dupont Park, including the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, do not represent actions that would result in any impacts to the geologic resources within or adjacent to the project site. As a result, implementation of the no action alternative would result in no beneficial or adverse cumulative impact to the existing geologic resources of the area.

Conclusion. Implementation of the no action alternative would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to soils due to continued compaction of soils occurring in the existing recreational fields. There would be no impacts to topography or geology under this alternative. There would be no adverse or beneficial cumulative impacts related to physiographic resources. Overall, there would be no impairment of these resources under the no action alternative.

Alternative 2 – Transfer jurisdiction of NPS property to the District to facilitate the improvement and expansion of sports related recreational facilities.

Analysis. Alternative 2 consists of transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area from the NPS to the District. After the transfer of jurisdiction is complete, actions associated with the improvement and expansion of sports-related facilities would be carried forward and include the development of a Youth Baseball Academy, the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena, and maintaining the existing three basketball and four tennis courts.

The Youth Baseball Academy would consist of an administration building, two softball fields, one regulation hardball field, the option for a multi-purpose sports field, and parking facilities. Under Option A, the regulation hardball field (field #1) would be located between the proposed administration building near the ice arena parking lot and one of the proposed softball fields (field #2). Another softball field (field #3) would be located south of the regulation field, and the existing horse lunge would be relocated approximately 100 feet from its current location to the south. This option would also include an L-shaped 147-space parking lot west of fields #1 and #2. Under Option A, minor grading and leveling would affect the area of the proposed baseball academy and accompanying parking. This would result in approximately 7.17 acres (312,325 sq. ft.) of ground disturbance.

Under Option B, the regulation hardball field would be located between the existing tennis courts and the proposed field #2. A 139-space parking lot would be constructed immediately south of field #2. Under this option, field #3 would be located adjacent to the horse lunge, which would remain at its current location. Option B would result in 7.66 acres (333,670 sq. ft.) of disturbance to soils at the site.

Option C would include a 360-foot by 175-foot (or smaller) multi-purpose sports field. Softball field #2 would be located immediately south of a multi-purpose field, which would be constructed adjacent to the existing tennis courts. The regulation hardball field and the baseball academy would be located adjacent to the ice arena parking lot, and Softball field #3 would be located near the southern end of the project site. This alternative would also include a two new parking lot (totaling approximately 76 parking spaces) southeast of the existing basketball courts. Activities associated with Option C would disturb approximately 7.94 acres (345,866 sq. ft.) of soils at the site.

Under alternative 2 and any of the proposed Youth Baseball Academy options, heavy machinery would be used in grading and leveling the site in preparation for the proposed ice arena expansion, baseball and/or multipurpose sports fields, Youth Baseball Academy building, and parking areas. As a result of these activities, soils would be compacted; soil layer structure would be disturbed and modified; and soils would be exposed, increasing the overall potential for erosion. Soil productivity would decline in disturbed areas. During all construction activities, those mitigation measures (detailed in the “Alternatives” chapter) defined within the District-approved Soil Erosion Control Plan would be implemented to minimize adverse impacts to soils. Adverse impacts to soils associated with construction of the ball fields and baseball academy would be short-term and minor.

The expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena under any of the four proposed options would occur on previously disturbed, impermeable surfaces within the approximate two-acre footprint of the existing parking lot and ice rink facility, and would not result in any additional area being disturbed. Any effects on soils surrounding the footprint of the proposed ice rink expansion that could occur from construction equipment working onsite would be mitigated after construction has been completed by tilling the soil and replanting the surrounding areas impacted, as needed. Adverse impacts to soils as a result of the proposed expansion to the ice arena would be short-term and negligible.

After construction, soil compaction and disturbance would occur on the ball fields due to the continued use of athletic activities. Compacted and disturbed soils contribute to reduce water infiltration rates, allowing for greater runoff and increased potential for erosion. Compacted soils can also inhibit seed germination and plant growth, which over the long term decreases the amount of organic material within the soils and decreases overall soil productivity. The proposal would locate new athletic fields on an already impacted site, and would not result in more severe disturbances than those that already exist. In

addition, continued maintenance of the athletic fields and the implementation of an approved turf management plan would help maintain a vegetative cover on these fields, which would help mitigate the impacts of continual recreational uses of these fields. Adverse impacts to soils associated with ongoing use of the ball fields would be long-term and minor.

Adverse impacts to soils would occur as previously undisturbed areas are permanently covered by the Youth Baseball Academy building, walkways, and parking lots and the natural functions of these soils are lost. However, because the area that would be permanently covered would be relatively small when compared to the remainder of the project area and adjacent Fort Dupont Park, adverse impacts to soils would be long-term and minor.

The northern portion of the site, where the majority of development is proposed, is characterized by relatively flat topography. Therefore, installation of the proposed amenities would result in negligible amounts of cut and fill. On the southern portion of the site where field #3 is proposed, the site is characterized by a steeper 15-40 percent grade. This would necessitate additional leveling and grading activity and greater impacts to site topography. The topography in the proposed development area for the field gently slopes to the southeast, with elevations in the area ranging from 117 to 98 feet above sea level. Minor alteration of existing slope could be expected as a result of grading and leveling necessary to accommodate the proposed field, resulting in long-term minor adverse impacts to the topography of the site. Only minimal land disturbance is anticipated as a result of the proposal, which would have no adverse impact upon natural geologic features and conditions at the project site.

Cumulative Impacts. Impacts to physiographic resources are site specific and are not affected by cumulative development outside the study area. Cumulative impacts would only occur if development immediately within or adjacent to the site directly or indirectly affected the geology, topography, and/or soils. Recent projects in the area of Fort Dupont Park, including the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, do not represent actions that would result in any impacts to the geologic resources within or adjacent to the project site. As a result, implementation of any of the options proposed under alternative 2 would result in no beneficial or adverse cumulative impacts to the existing geologic resources of the area.

Conclusion. Implementation of any of the options presented under alternative 2 would result in short-term and long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to soils from the increased potential for erosion, compaction, loss of productivity, and disturbance of soils resulting from construction and recreational activities. Long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to topography would occur near the southern end of the project area. No impacts to geology would result from implementation of this alternative. There would be no adverse or beneficial cumulative impacts to geologic resources associated with this alternative. There would be no impairment of physiographic resources under alternative 2.

VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE

Methodology and Assumptions

Impacts to visitor use and experience were determined by considering the effect of the existing conditions and the proposed construction/operation of the improved and expanded sports-related facilities on the overall experience of those Park visitors who utilize the area.

Study Area

The geographic study area for visitor use and experience is within the Fort Dupont Park and primarily the recreational areas on the north side of the Park.

Impact Thresholds

The following thresholds were defined:

Negligible — Visitors would likely be unaware of impacts associated with implementation of the alternative. There would be no noticeable change in visitor use and experience or in any defined indicators of visitor satisfaction or behavior.

Minor — Changes in visitor use and/or experience would be slight and detectable, but would not appreciably limit or enhance critical characteristics of the visitor experience. Visitor satisfaction would remain stable.

Moderate — Few critical characteristics of the desired visitor experience would change. The number of participants engaging in a specified activity would be altered. Some visitors who desire their continued use and enjoyment of the activity/visitor experience might be required to pursue their choices in other available local or regional areas. Visitor satisfaction would begin to either decline or increase.

Major — Multiple critical characteristics of the desired visitor experience would change and/or the number of participants engaging in an activity would be greatly reduced or increased. Visitors who desire their continued use and enjoyment of the activity/visitor experience would be required to pursue their choices in other available local or regional areas. Visitor satisfaction would markedly decline or increase.

Duration – Short-term impacts would be immediate, occurring during implementation of the alternative. Long-term impacts would persist after implementation of the alternative.

Impacts of Alternative 1 - No Action Alternative

Analysis. Under the no action alternative, the Project Area would continue to be managed by NPS and no changes to the 2004 *Fort Circle Park Management Plan* would be required. All recreational facilities (baseball field, multi-purpose sports field, basketball courts, and tennis courts) would continue to be maintained by the NPS. The Fort Dupont Ice Arena would continue to be operated under its current lease agreement. Parking facilities and parking capacity would remain the same. Regular maintenance activities would remain in place, with some of the facilities degrading over time. Current visitor use trends for the recreational facilities would most likely continue into the future. Visitation fluctuations and possibly a continued decline in use of some of the facilities may occur.

The organized sports programs would most likely continue with the use of the baseball field, the multi-purpose field, and the tennis courts. Opportunistic use of the basketball courts, the tennis courts, and the multi-purpose field would continue as described in the Affected Environment chapter. The ice arena would continue to be unable to meet the ever-increasing demand for its services, and would only be able to accommodate its current use of approximately 10,000 people per year.

The lack of adequate recreational facilities and the inability of the ice arena to meet its increased demand would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to visitor use and experience under the no action alternative.

Cumulative Impacts. Recreational projects within or near Fort Dupont Park, such as the proposed Anacostia Riverwalk, would provide bicycle and pedestrian trails along the Anacostia River west of the Park. Additional local trails could cause a decline in the use of the Park for these types of activities. If the recreation facilities in the Park are not improved to meet visitors' needs, there would be long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts to visitor use and experience. These impacts, in combination with the long-term minor adverse impacts of the no action alternative, would result in long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts.

Conclusion. Implementation of the no action alternative would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to visitor use and experience from the lack of facilities, amenities, and opportunities for recreational programs, particularly for children and young adults. Long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts would occur under the no action alternative.

Alternative 2 – Transfer jurisdiction of NPS property to the District to facilitate the improvement and expansion of sports related recreational facilities.

Analysis. Alternative 2 consists of transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area from the NPS to the District. After the transfer of jurisdiction is complete, actions associated with the improvement and

expansion of sports-related facilities would be carried forward and include the development of a Youth Baseball Academy (three proposed options), the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena (four proposed options), and maintaining the existing three basketball and four tennis courts.

To accommodate the expansion of the ice arena, 20 to 65 of the current 188 parking spaces in the ice rink parking area would be eliminated. However, additional parking spaces would be created to support parking at the ball fields: 147 spaces in one lot under Option A, 160 in two lots under Option B, and 76 spaces under Option C. Under all three options, there would be long-term beneficial impacts to users and visitors would occur from the additional 40 to 160 parking spaces.

No physical changes would occur to the current configuration of the four tennis and three basketball courts currently on site. There would likely be no adverse impacts on visitor use and experience from transferring the management of these facilities from the NPS to the District's DPR.

There would be short-term moderate adverse impacts to visitor use and experience during the construction of the proposed new fields and facilities (i.e., Youth Baseball Academy building and the Fort Dupont Ice Arena expansion) under any of the proposed options because the area and ice arena would be closed for recreational uses.

Under Options A and B of this alternative, the multi-purpose field would be eliminated, which would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to those who participate in the youth and adult flag football leagues, Boys and Girls Club, and other non-sponsored groups that use the field. Under Option C, the existing multi-purpose field would be improved and upgraded for use, which would result in long-term beneficial impacts to the youth and adult flag football leagues, the Boys and Girls Club, and other non-sponsored groups that use the multi-purpose field.

Under all of the proposed options, visitor use of the Project Area would likely increase. There would be long-term beneficial impacts to those visitors who wish to participate in the programs provided by the Youth Baseball Academy. Aside from just providing organized youth baseball, the Youth Baseball Academy would also teach the fundamentals of baseball and sportsmanship and provide after-school educational programs, enriching the overall experience of the users of this facility. In addition, expanding the ice arena and improving its facilities would result in long-term beneficial impacts to those visitors who use, or are on the waiting list to use, the Fort Dupont Ice Arena.

Cumulative Impacts. Recreational projects within or near Fort Dupont Park, such as the proposed Anacostia Riverwalk, would provide bicycle and pedestrian trails along the Anacostia River west of the Park, which would provide residents of the District and surrounding communities with additional and more diverse recreational opportunities throughout the city. These beneficial impacts, in combination with the short-term moderate adverse impacts to visitor use and experience during construction, long-term minor adverse impacts that could occur under either Options A or B, and the long-term Beneficial impacts that would occur under all options would result in long-term beneficial cumulative impacts to visitor use and experience.

Conclusion. Implementation of alternative 2 would result in short-term moderate adverse impacts to visitor use and experience during the construction of the fields and other recreational facilities. There is no multi-purpose sports field included under either of the Youth Baseball Academy's Option A or B, which would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to those who currently utilize that field. However, with the inclusion and improvements to the multi-purpose sports field under Option C, there would be long-term beneficial impacts to those who utilize that field. Overall, there would also be long-term beneficial impacts to those who would utilize the Youth Baseball Academy and expanded ice arena facilities. Alternative 2 would result in long-term beneficial cumulative impacts.

SOCIOECONOMICS

Methodology and Assumptions

Because of the urban nature of the Park, the project area is surrounded on all sides by housing developments. As described in the Affected Environment chapter, the neighborhoods surrounding Fort Dupont Park are home to a high number of minorities, youths, and individuals below the poverty line. The impacts of the proposed transfer of jurisdiction and the improvement and expansion of recreational activities would affect the socioeconomics of the neighboring community by adding potential new job opportunities to the area and promoting recreational activities for the youth of the community.

Study Area

The geographic study area for socioeconomics analysis includes Fort Dupont Park and the adjacent neighborhoods in the District, including census tracts 76.04, 77.07, 99.01, 99.07 in the District and 8024.03, 8025.01, and 8027 in Prince George's County.

Impact Thresholds

The impact intensities for socioeconomics were defined as follows:

Negligible — Little or no noticeable change in economic activity, employment and income levels, or population migration or immigration.

Minor — Local changes in economic activity, employment and income levels, or population migration or immigration.

Moderate — Regional changes in overall economic activity, employment and income levels, or population migration or immigration.

Major — Widespread, significant changes in overall economic activity, employment and income levels, or population migration or immigration

Duration – Short-term impacts would be immediate, occurring during implementation of the alternative. Long-term impacts would persist after implementation of the alternative.

Impacts of Alternative 1 - No Action Alternative

Analysis. Under the no action alternative, the Project Area would continue to be managed by NPS and no changes to the 2004 *Fort Circle Park Management Plan* would be required. Visitors would continue to use the ballfields, tennis and basketball courts, picnicking areas, ice skating, and hiking and biking trails. These recreational opportunities would not be improved or expanded upon and would continue to be used in their current manner. Changes to income levels would not occur, housing prices most likely would not change, and the social makeup of age, race, and poverty level would not be affected. Crime in the area would likely continue along current trends. While the long-term beneficial impacts would continue as Fort Dupont Ice Arena would remain open to provide area youth with structured organized activities and a safe haven, long-term minor adverse impacts to socioeconomics would occur because the current programming and facilities of the ice arena cannot accommodate everyone who seeks to use them.

Cumulative Impacts. There are a number of present or proposed future actions under the no action alternative that could cumulatively impact socioeconomics in the area. These actions include the Anacostia Riverwalk and housing developments along Kenilworth Avenue. The Anacostia Riverwalk has the potential to impact the local economy of the area by providing competing recreational opportunities in a nearby area, while improving the aesthetics and setting of the area. The Kenilworth Avenue housing developments would increase the population of the surrounding neighborhoods, which may affect the racial, age, and economic composition of the area. These impacts, in combination with the long-term beneficial and long-term minor adverse impacts associated with the no action alternative, would result in overall long-term beneficial cumulative impacts to the socioeconomics of the project area.

Conclusion. Implementation of the no action alternative would result in some long-term beneficial impacts as the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would remain open at its current capacity. However, long-term minor adverse impacts to socioeconomics would occur because the current programming and facilities of the ice arena cannot accommodate everyone who seeks to use them. Overall, there would be long-term beneficial cumulative impacts associated with the no action alternative.

Alternative 2 – Transfer jurisdiction of NPS property to the District to facilitate the improvement and expansion of sports related recreational facilities.

Analysis. Alternative 2 consists of transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area from the NPS to the District. After the transfer of jurisdiction is complete, actions associated with the improvement and expansion of sports-related facilities would be carried forward and include the development of a Youth Baseball Academy (three proposed options), the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena (four proposed options), and maintaining the existing three basketball and four tennis courts.

The construction of these additional recreational facilities within this community could have positive impacts on the community as a whole. Increasing the opportunities for organized recreation in the community by expanding the facilities at Fort Dupont Ice Arena and providing a Youth Baseball Academy would provide a safe haven for more children from around the area to play and learn, and would keep more children occupied after school, weekends, and on summer holidays. These proposed facilities and programs may decrease the overall amount of juvenile crime in the area by refocusing their energy on athleticism and teamwork and by keeping the area children occupied with organized, healthful activities during the times they are neither at school nor at home. As a result, there would likely be long-term beneficial impacts to the local community through the potential decrease in juvenile crime rate over time.

There may also be long-term beneficial impacts with the potential increase in local property values as the new facilities would provide aesthetically pleasing surroundings and increased opportunities for extracurricular and educational activities than the current sports fields. These new and improved facilities would also be considered amenities to the community, which would make the area more attractive to families looking to move into the area, and may increase property values in the area.

Additional personnel would be necessary to staff the Youth Baseball Academy and the expanded ice arena; however, the level of staffing is not known at this time and would be adjusted to meet the need. This overall increase in jobs in the local area would be small; however, it would provide long-term beneficial impacts on the economy of the area. There would be no noticeable change to the social makeup of age, race, and poverty level in the area.

Cumulative Impacts. There are a number of present or proposed future actions under alternative 2 that could cumulatively impact socioeconomics in the area.. These actions include the Anacostia Riverwalk, housing developments along Kenilworth Avenue, and the development of the St. Elizabeth's West Campus Master Plan. The Anacostia Riverwalk has the potential to impact the local economy of the area by providing competing recreational opportunities in a nearby area, while improving the aesthetics and setting of the area. The Kenilworth Avenue housing developments would increase the population of the surrounding neighborhoods, which may affect the racial, age, and economic composition of the area. The redevelopment outlined in the St. Elizabeth's West Master Plan Proposal would likely bring in increased employment opportunities to the area. These impacts, in combination with the long-term beneficial impacts associated with alternative 2, would result in long-term beneficial cumulative impacts to the local community and economy.

Conclusion. Implementation of alternative 2 would result in long-term beneficial impacts to the local community and economy as recreational facilities would be improved and expanded. The increased availability of organized recreational opportunities may lead to a decrease in juvenile crime in the area. In addition, the local economy may benefit with the potential increase in local property values and the small increase in local employment. The improved and expanded facilities may also have long-term beneficial cumulative impacts on the crime rate, employment, and housing values of the surrounding communities.

PARK OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Study Area

The geographic study area for park operations and management is the Project Area proposed to be transferred jurisdictionally to the District of Columbia to facilitate the improvement and expansion of recreational facilities currently on the site.

Impact Thresholds

The impact intensities for health and safety were defined as follows:

Negligible — Park operations would not be impacted, or the impacts would be at low levels of detection and would not have an appreciable effect on NPS and the District's operations.

Minor — The impact would be detectable and would be of a magnitude that would not have an appreciable effect on NPS and District's operations. If mitigation was needed to offset adverse effects, it would be simple and likely successful.

Moderate — The impacts would be readily apparent and result in a substantial change in NPS and District's operations in a manner noticeable to staff and the public. Mitigation measures would be necessary to offset adverse effects and would likely be successful.

Major — The effects would be readily apparent, result in a substantial change in NPS and District's operation in a manner noticeable to staff and the public, and be markedly different from existing operations. Mitigation measures to offset adverse effects would be needed and extensive, and success could not be guaranteed.

Duration — Short-term impacts would be immediate, occurring during implementation of the alternative. Long-term impacts would persist after implementation of the alternative.

Impacts of Alternative A - No Action Alternative

Analysis. Under the no action alternative, jurisdictional responsibilities of the Project Area would remain with the NPS, and no changes to the 2004 *Fort Circle Park Management Plan* would be required. The Fort Dupont Ice Arena would continue to be operated under its current lease agreement by the Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena at its current capacity, and the remaining recreational facilities (one baseball field, one multi-purpose sports field, three basketball courts, and four tennis courts) would continue to be maintained by the NPS. The horse lunge would remain at its current location and continue to be used by the USPP. No impacts to park operation and management are expected and no amendments to the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan* would be required under the no action alternative.

Cumulative Impacts. Because there would be no impacts to park operations and management under the no action alternative when combined with other proposed projects, there would be no cumulative impacts.

Conclusion. Implementation of the no action alternative would result in no direct or cumulative impacts to park operations and management. The NPS would continue its current management of the Park and the Fort Dupont Ice Arena would continue to be operated under its current lease agreement by the Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena at its current capacity. No cumulative impacts would occur.

Alternative 2 – Transfer jurisdiction of NPS property to the District to facilitate the improvement and expansion of sports related recreational facilities...

Analysis. Under alternative 2 consists of transfer of jurisdiction of the Project Area from the NPS to the District. Afterwards, actions associated with the improvement and expansion of sports-related facilities would be carried forward and include the development of a Youth Baseball Academy (three proposed options), the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena (four proposed options), and maintaining the existing three basketball and four tennis courts.

Under all options, The Youth Baseball Academy, including the administration building and the three fields to support the programming needs of the baseball academy (one regulation hardball field, and two

softball fields), would be managed by the Washington Nationals Major League Baseball Club with cooperation from the District. The Fort Dupont Ice Arena would continue to be managed by the Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena; however, this facility would be transferred to the District and it would no longer be a part of Fort Dupont Park. In addition, the basketball and tennis courts would also be transferred to the District and managed by the District's DPR.

Relocation of the USPP horse lunge under the Youth Baseball Academy Options A and C would result in short-term, minor adverse impacts to USPP operations. During construction of the new facilities, the use of the horse lunge would be temporarily shut down, which may inconvenience USPP operations. Once moved, there may be long-term negligible adverse impacts on the USPP as the horses would have to be walked an additional 100 feet to the new lunge area. The horse lunge would continue to be managed by NPS for USPP use under all options. Under Option B, there would be no impacts to the horse lunge area.

Under alternative 2, the District, the Washington Nationals, and Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena would oversee the construction of the new recreational facilities and supporting parking areas. Following the transfer of jurisdiction, the Project Area would no longer be a part of Fort Dupont Park and would not be managed or maintained by the NPS. However, the NPS would be consulted on all planning efforts associated with the project to ensure compliance with the jurisdictional transfer.

The jurisdictional transfer of the Project Area from NPS to the District would necessitate amending the 2004 *Fort Circle Management Plan*. However, over the long-term, there would be beneficial impacts on NPS park operations and management, as NPS funds used for management and operations of this parcel could be diverted to other uses within Fort Dupont Park and/or National Capital Parks-East.

The jurisdictional transfer would also result in long-term, minor adverse impacts to the DPR, as funds would be allocated to maintain and manage the multi-purpose field (under Option C) and the basketball and tennis courts (under all options).

Additionally, funds to construct and maintain the second pad of ice at the ice arena would be necessary and would be provided by the Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena. The Washington Nationals Baseball Club would also need to provide additional funds to construct, maintain, and manage the Youth Baseball Academy and its associated fields. The necessary funds to construct the proposed facilities would be an added burden to these organizations.

Cumulative Impacts. Development of the Anacostia Riverwalk would increase the DDOT's overall operation and management requirements. Additionally, one of the key objectives for developing the Anacostia Riverwalk is to increase public use of the Anacostia National Park. This increase in use could potentially increase NPS operation and management of the facilities at the Anacostia Park.

The Poplar Point Redevelopment Project would increase District operation and management requirements for the new recreation facilities proposed at the site. In addition, NPS National Capital Parks-East headquarters and USPP facilities located on Poplar Point would be relocated under this proposed project. After being relocated, normal NPS operations and management would resume.

These impacts, in combination with the long-term beneficial impacts and short-term minor and long-term negligible adverse impacts to the NPS, and the long-term minor adverse impacts that would occur to the District's operations and management, would result in long-term, minor adverse cumulative impacts to District's operation and management as resource requirements would increase overall. Cumulative impacts to NPS operations and management would be long-term and beneficial, as NPS funds currently used for management and operations of the Project Area could be diverted to other NPS facilities in the region, including Anacostia National Park.

Conclusion. Implementation of alternative 2 would have long-term beneficial impacts on NPS park operations and management as NPS personnel and resources could be allocated to other NPS units. Under Options A and C, there would be short-term minor and long-term negligible adverse impacts to the USPP, as the horse lunge is relocated approximately 100 feet. With increased management responsibilities, there would be long-term minor adverse impacts on the overall operations and management of the District,

Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena, and the Washington Nationals, as personnel and resources would be reallocated to provide support of the proposed new facilities. In addition, there would be long-term minor adverse cumulative impacts to the District's operation and management and long-term beneficial impacts to NPS operations and management.

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COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

District of Columbia and Federal Agency Coordination and Consultation

Coordination with the District and federal agencies was conducted during the NEPA process to identify issues and/or concerns related to natural and cultural resources found within Fort Dupont Park, an administrative unit of the NCP-East.

All consultations with the State Historic Preservation Officer for the District (DC HPO), as mandated in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA Section 106), are occurring as part of the development of this EA. There are no National Register structures or cultural landscape features of any significance located within the project area. The project area has also been heavily impacted by previous disturbance and recent recreational uses and thus, has little potential for having archaeological resources.

The Park has contacted the DC HPO at the D.C. Office of Planning and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) (Appendix A). The NPS initiated the consultation process and briefly explained the project. This EA, along with the latest site plans and documents, will be forwarded to the DCHPO in a “seeking concurrence to a determination of effect” package as part of the Section 106 consultation process.

In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the Park also sent a letter to solicit comments from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service regarding potential occurrences of any federal or state listed species within the project area that could be adversely impacted by the proposed alternatives. A letter or responded was received on July 24, 2008 from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service indicating that there are no known federal or state listed species that occur within the project area and concurred with the opinion that the proposed actions would have no effect on any federally-listed threatened or endangered species (Appendix B).

Public Outreach

On May 12, 2008, the NPS and the District held a public scoping meeting to initiate public involvement and solicit community feedback on the proposed action to transfer jurisdiction of NPS property to the District. The meeting was held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Sousa Middle School, 3650 Ely Place SE, Washington, DC 20019. This location was chosen because it is the largest available District-owned venue in close proximity to the site. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting.

The NPS and the District sent out 622 public scoping letters to members of the FDIA, nearby residents, and organizations. In addition, notification of the meeting was advertised in the May 2008 issue of the *East of the River* newspaper (Appendix C). The public scoping meeting was also announced on the NPS's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website (www.parkplanning.nps.gov/NACE).

The public scoping comment period began on April 29, 2008 with the email notification of the public scoping meeting. The public scoping period concluded on July 24, 2008, as announced by the June 24, 2008 Federal Register notice (Volume 73, Number 122) (Appendix C). During the public scoping comment period, NPS and the District received hundreds of comments from citizens throughout the District providing support for the expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena. There were also multiple comments expressing support for the Youth Baseball Academy and several that expressed concern regarding the potential for the proposed ice arena expansion to be sited within the adjacent forested area directly to the south of the current facility.

If it is determined after this EA process that there are no significant impacts to resources within Fort Dupont or the District and an EIS would not be required, decision documents would be prepared by the NPS and the District summarize the findings of the EA and provide a concise rationale on how the NPS and the District made their final decisions. Once completed and it is determined that the transfer of jurisdiction can be carried forward, in accordance with 40 USC - Sec. 8124, the District would then

present their proposal and all accompanying compliance documents to the NCPC for its approval. Upon approval, NCPC would provide its recommendation for the transfer to the Council of the District of Columbia for their approval. Following approval by the Council, the proposed action would then be carried forward. District authorities would be responsible for reporting transfer of jurisdiction to Congress.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ABAAS	Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards
APE	Area of Potential Effect
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DC HPO	District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office
DDOT	District of Columbia Department of Transportation
DPR	District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation
EA	Environmental Assessment
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FDIA	Friends of Fort Dupont Ice Arena
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
GSA	General Services Administration
HRS	Historic Resource Study
MLB	Major League Baseball
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NCP	National Capital Parks
NCPC	National Capital Planning Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PEPC	Planning, Environment and Public Comment
Project Area	The approximately 15-acre area proposed for jurisdictional transfer is situated in the northern portion of Fort Dupont Park, bounded by Ely Place SE to the north, Minnesota Avenue SE to the west, and Ridge Road SE to the east.
Pub. L.	Public Law
RBI	Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities
REAP	Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Procedures
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USPP	U.S. Park Police
USC	United States Code
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VOC	volatile organic compound
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Affected Environment — The existing environment to be affected by a proposed action and alternatives.

Best Management Practices — Methods that have been determined to be the most effective, practical means of preventing or reducing pollution or other adverse environmental impacts.

Contributing Resource — A building, site, structure, or object that adds to the historic significance of a property or district.

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) — Established by Congress within the Executive Office of the President with passage of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969*. CEQ coordinates federal environmental efforts and works closely with agencies and other White House offices in the development of environmental policies and initiatives.

Cultural Resources — Historic districts, sites, buildings, objects, or any other physical evidence of human activity considered important to a culture, subculture, or community for scientific, traditional, religious, or any other reason.

Cumulative Impacts — Under NEPA regulations, the incremental environmental impact or effect of an action together with the effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions (40 CFR 1508.7).

Deciduous — Describing tree species that have leaves that fall off every season.

Emergency Services — Public services that respond to emergency situations including police, fire, rescue, and EMS.

Enabling Legislation — National Park Service legislation setting forth the legal parameters by which each park may operate.

Endangered Species — “...any species (including subspecies or qualifying distinct population segment) that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range (ESA Section 3(6)).” The lead federal agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for the listing of a species as endangered is responsible for reviewing the status of the species on a five-year basis.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 USC 1531 et seq.) — An Act to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved and to provide a program for the conservation of such endangered species and threatened species.

Environmental Assessment (EA) — An environmental analysis prepared pursuant to the *National Environmental Policy Act* to determine whether a federal action would significantly affect the environment and thus require a more detailed environmental impact statement (EIS).

Executive Order — Official proclamation issued by the President that may set forth policy or direction or establish specific duties in connection with the execution of federal laws and programs.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) — A document prepared by a federal agency showing why a proposed action would not have a significant impact on the environment and thus would not require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. A FONSI is based on the results of an Environmental Assessment.

Floodplain — The flat or nearly flat land along a river or stream or in a tidal area that is covered by water during a flood.

Horse Lunge - An enclosed circle, at least 60 feet in diameter, that is used to train and exercise horses.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) — The Act as amended articulates the federal law that mandates protecting the quality of the human environment. It requires federal agencies to systematically assess the environmental impacts of their proposed activities, programs, and projects including the “no

action” alternative of not pursuing the proposed action. NEPA requires agencies to consider alternative ways of accomplishing their missions in ways which are less damaging to the environment.

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470 et seq.) — An Act to establish a program for the preservation of historic properties throughout the nation, and for other purposes, approved October 15, 1966 [Public Law 89-665; 80 STAT.915; 16 USC 470 as amended by Public Law 91-243, Public Law 93-54, Public Law 94-422, Public Law 94-458, Public Law 96-199, Public Law 96-244, Public Law 96-515, Public Law 98-483, Public Law 99-514, Public Law 100-127, and Public Law 102-575].

National Register of Historic Places (National Register) — A register of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects important in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture, maintained by the Secretary of the Interior under authority of Section 2(b) of the *Historic Sites Act of 1935* and Section 101(a)(1) of the *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966*, as amended.

Organic Act — Enacted in 1916, this Act commits the National Park Service to making informed decisions that perpetuate the conservation and protection of park resources unimpaired for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

Scoping — Scoping, as part of NEPA, requires examining a proposed action and its possible effects; establishing the depth of environmental analysis needed; determining analysis procedures, data needed, and task assignments. The public is encouraged to participate and submit comments on proposed projects during the scoping period.

Topography — The physical features of a surface area including relative elevations and the position of natural and man-made (anthropogenic) features.

Wetlands — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Federal Register, 1982) and the Environmental Protection Agency (Federal Register, 1980) jointly define wetlands as: Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

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APPENDIX A: NHPA Section 106 Consultation Letters

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PAGE 02/05



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Capital Parks-East
1900 Anacostia Drive, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H30(NCR-NACE)

July 15, 2008

Mr. Don Klima, Director
Office of Federal Agency Programs
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 809
Washington, DC 20004

Subject: Proposed Transfer of 15-Acre Parcel of Fort Dupont Park
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Klima:

The National Park Service is proposing to transfer jurisdiction of a 15-acre parcel to the District of Columbia Department of Recreation. The proposed land transfer will be for the express purpose of improving and expanding sports-related recreational facilities within Fort Dupont Park.

We are now preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate effects of the land transfer, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. We plan to use the NEPA process to fulfill the requirement to take into account the effect of the undertaking on historic properties, as outlined in the implementing regulations for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In accordance with the procedures found at 36 CFR 800.8, we are hereby notifying your office of our intent to fulfill the requirements of Section 106 through the EA process.

While the site of the historic Civil War earthworks of the Fort Dupont fortification, an element of the Civil War Defenses of Washington (Fort Circle Parks) that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is over a mile from the subject project site, we are mindful of other, more nearby historic, scenic and cultural features of Fort Dupont Park. We hope to mitigate any potential impacts to these historic and scenic features through a combination of land use restriction, building height limitations, tree protection zones, mitigative landscaping, etc. for the property proposed for transfer.

As the historic zone of the park would not be directly involved in the subject undertaking, and the transfer will be governed by a deed that strictly defines the future use of the property, we do not anticipate that the transfer will have an adverse effect on the historic property. It is, however, important to mention that the Fort Dupont Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp was located

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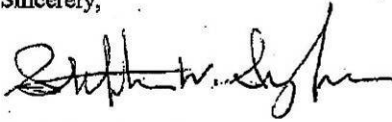
NCP EAST


PAGE 03/05

in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Moreover, the nearby Fort Davis and Fort Dupont Drives built by the CCC, essentially constitutes the only constructed portion of *Fort Drive*, envisioned in the 1902 "McMillan Report." Similarly, we recognize that the views from, and of Fort Dupont Park and other portions of the Fort Circle Parks, as important features acknowledged in the "McMillan Plan" that are identified as important management objectives (purposes) of the park in the approved Fort Circle Parks Management Plan.

We ask you to notify us of any concerns within 30 days. If there are any questions or if there is a need for additional information, please contact our park Historian, Dr. Frank Farragasso at (202) 692-6038.

Sincerely,



 Gayle Hazelwood
Superintendent

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NCP EAST

PAGE 04/05



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Capital Parks-East
1900 Anacostia Drive, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30(NCR-NACE)

July 15, 2008

Mr. David Maloney
State Historic Preservation Officer
Historic Preservation Office
D.C. Office of Planning
801 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 4000
Washington, D.C. 20002

Subject: Proposed Transfer of Jurisdiction for 15-Acre Parcel of Fort Dupont Park

Dear Mr. Maloney:

The National Park Service is proposing to transfer jurisdiction of a 15-acre parcel to the District of Columbia Department of Recreation. The proposed land transfer will be for the express purpose of improving and expanding sports-related recreational facilities within Fort Dupont Park.

We are now preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate effects of the land transfer, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. We plan to use the NEPA process to fulfill the requirement to take into account the effect of the undertaking on historic properties, as outlined in the implementing regulations for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In accordance with the procedures found at 36 CFR 800.8, we are hereby notifying your office of our intent to fulfill the requirements of Section 106 through the EA process. A copy of the draft EA will be provided to your office (and to the public) for review when it becomes available.

While the site of the historic Civil War earthworks of the Fort Dupont fortification, an element of the Civil War Defenses of Washington (Fort Circle Parks) that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is over a mile from the subject project site, we are mindful of other, more nearby historic, scenic and cultural features of Fort Dupont Park. We hope to mitigate any potential impacts to these historic and scenic features through a combination of land use restriction, building height limitations, tree protection zones, mitigative landscaping, etc., for the property proposed for transfer.

As the historic zone of the park would not be directly involved in the subject undertaking, and the transfer will be governed by a deed that strictly defines the future use of the property, we do not anticipate that the transfer will have an adverse effect on the historic property. It is, however,

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NCP EAST

PAGE 05/05

important to mention that the Fort Dupont Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp was located in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Moreover, the nearby Fort Davis and Fort Dupont Drives built by the CCC, essentially constitutes the only constructed portion of *Fort Drive*, envisioned in the 1902 "McMillan Report." Similarly, we recognize that the views from, and of Fort Dupont Park and other portions of the Fort Circle Parks, as important features acknowledged in the "McMillan Plan" that are identified as important management objectives (purposes) of the park in the approved Fort Circle Parks Management Plan.

We are enclosing a map that illustrates the parcel that is being considered for transfer as well as a copy of the Fort Dupont Park Historic Resources Study of 2004 and the Fort Circle Parks Management Plan. We ask you to notify us of any concerns within 30 days. If there are any questions or if there is a need for additional information, please contact our park Historian, Dr. Frank Farragasso at (202) 692-6038.

Sincerely,



for Gayle Hazelwood
Superintendent

Enclosures

APPENDIX B: ESA Section 7 Consultation Letter

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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Chesapeake Bay Field Office
177 Admiral Cochrane Drive
Annapolis, MD 21401
410/573-4575



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out*

July 24, 2008

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Capital Parks East
1900 Anacostia Drive, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020

RE: *Transfer Jurisdiction of a portion of NPS property (Fort Dupont Park)*

Dear Stephen W. Syphax:

This responds to your letter, received July 18, 2008, requesting information on the presence of species which are federally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened within the vicinity of the above reference project area. We have reviewed the information you enclosed and are providing comments in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Except for occasional transient individuals, no federally proposed or listed endangered or threatened species are known to exist within the project impact area. Therefore, no Biological Assessment or further section 7 Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required. Should project plans change, or if additional information on the distribution of listed or proposed species becomes available, this determination may be reconsidered.

This response relates only to federally protected threatened or endangered species under our jurisdiction. For information on the presence of other rare species, you should contact Lori Byrne of the Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Division at (410) 260-8573.

Effective August 8, 2007, under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) removed (delist) the bald eagle in the lower 48 States of the United States from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife. However, the bald eagle will still be protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Lacey Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. As a result, starting on August 8, 2007, if your project may cause "disturbance" to the bald eagle, please consult the "National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines" dated May 2007.

If any planned or ongoing activities cannot be conducted in compliance with the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (Eagle Management Guidelines), please contact the Chesapeake Bay Ecological Services Field Office at 410-573-4573 for technical assistance. The Eagle

Management Guidelines can be found at:

<http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/issues/BaldEagle/NationalBaldEagleManagementGuidelines.pdf>.

In the future, if your project can not avoid disturbance to the bald eagle by complying with the Eagle Management Guidelines, you will be able to apply for a permit that authorizes the take of bald and golden eagles under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, generally where the take to be authorized is associated with otherwise lawful activities. This proposed permit process will not be available until the Service issues a final rule for the issuance of these take permits under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

An additional concern of the Service is wetlands protection. Federal and state partners of the Chesapeake Bay Program have adopted an interim goal of no overall net loss of the Basin's remaining wetlands, and the long term goal of increasing the quality and quantity of the Basin's wetlands resource base. Because of this policy and the functions and values wetlands perform, the Service recommends avoiding wetland impacts. All wetlands within the project area should be identified, and if construction in wetlands is proposed, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, should be contacted for permit requirements. They can be reached at (410) 962-3670.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide information relative to fish and wildlife issues, and thank you for your interests in these resources. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact Devin Ray at (410) 573-4531.


Sincerely,



Leopoldo Miranda Castro
Field Supervisor


APPENDIX C: Public Scoping Information

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Fort Dupont Park
Washington, D.C.

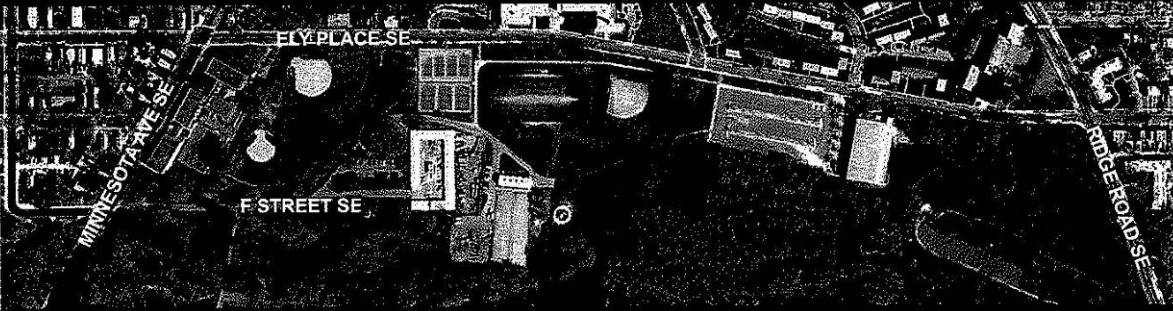
US Department of the Interior
National Park Service




The National Park Service (NPS) and District of Columbia Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) are preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the transfer of jurisdiction of a portion of land at Fort Dupont Park from NPS to the DC government for recreational purposes. Please join us for an informational public meeting:

Monday, May 12, 2008
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Sousa Middle School
3650 Ely Place SE
Washington, DC 20019

The proposed recreational uses include the possible addition of a new Youth Baseball Academy and the expansion of the Fort Dupont ice rink. No NPS facilities will be displaced as a result of this action. The alternatives analyzed in this EA will explore new configurations of the new and existing recreational facilities and land uses on the site.



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development



Light ing Corridor

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will be key, she says.
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allies to rejuvenate

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Yavocka Young, executive direc-
tor of Main Street Anacostia and
Ward 8 DC Council hopeful, con-
firmed that the owners have been
steadily working inside the building
and have applied for a Main Streets
grant for exterior signage.

The location, 2122 Martin Luther
King Jr. Ave, is currently vacant. Its
windows cracked and the aging façade
bearing the uneven load of a haphaz-
ard addition seemingly falling into
itself, the proposed business would be
a welcome addition to the Anacostia
neighborhood, and its indoor and out-
door seating would be noticeable step
up from the variety of mostly carry-
out food and convenience stores along
the same corridor.

Initial response to the possibility
of such a place in Anacostia has been
positive, leading one “And Now,
Anacostia” blog reader to comment,
“Whoa – that would be amaaaazing!”

ANC Notes

ANC 8

There will be an election to re-
place Commissioner 8A 07 on May
6 at the UPO on Good Hope Road
during the regularly scheduled ANC
8A monthly meeting.

Commissioners reiterated their
unanimous support to move the bus
stop from the corner of 14th Street
SE and Good Hope Road, where
loitering has been a recurring prob-
lem, to the space in front of 1335
Good Hope Road, less than a block
away. Both WMATA and represen-
tatives from the Metropolitan Police
Department have been to the site
and agree that it is not being used
as intended. The commission sent
a final letter to WMATA, and it is
awaiting action.

The District Department of
Transportation has finally removed
the railroad tracks from the street
bed on Pennsylvania Avenue at East
of the River’s gateway just across the
John Philip Sousa Bridge. The tracks,
a vestige of the area’s more industrial
past, served only to confuse drivers
and disturb wheels, are now gone
and the area has been repaved. ♦

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A FULL SERVICE HEALTH
CENTER FOR ALL OF YOUR
HEALTH CARE NEEDS IN
THE HEART OF WARD 7

For All of Your Health Care Needs!

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Offers

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- Pharmacy
- Lab (LabCorp, Inc.)
- Obstetrics
- Internal Medicine
- Pediatric
- Family Practice
- Mental Health/Behavioral Health
- Orthopedic
- Radiology
- Sonography
- Nutrition Counseling
- Health Education
- Asthma-Allergy Clinic
- WIC (on-site)
- Mammograms (GWU MAMMOVAN)
- Gynecology
- High Risk Prenatal Care

Accepts

- AETNA
- Alliance PPO
- CareFirst
- Chartered Health Plan
- D.C. Healthcare Alliance
- MAMSI
- MDIPA
- Medicaid
- Self Pay



HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OB/GYN SERVICES

Howard University Physicians offer:

- Onsite Family Planning
- Well Woman Exams
- High Risk OB
- Perinatal Services

Pub. #06-0499

Scheduled Appointments and Same Day Visits for Urgent Care

Monday and Wednesday 8:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:30 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. Saturday 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

CHARTERED FAMILY HEALTH CENTER • 1924 Minnesota Avenue, N.E. • Washington, DC 20019 • Tel. (202) 398-8683
Dorothy D. Chartered Health Plan, Inc.



Fort Dupont Park
Washington, D.C.

US Department of the Interior
National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) and District of Columbia Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) are preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the transfer of jurisdiction of a portion of land at Fort Dupont Park from NPS to the DC government for recreational purposes. Please join us for an informational public meeting on:

May 12, 2008 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the Sousa Middle School (3650 Ely Pl SE, Washington, DC)

The proposed recreational uses include the possible addition of a new Youth Baseball Academy and the expansion of the Fort Dupont ice rink. No NPS facilities will be displaced as a result of this action. The alternatives analyzed in this EA will explore new configurations of the new and existing recreational facilities and land uses on the site.

CAPITALCOMBINATIONS.COM ★ 27

35708

Federal Register / Vol. 73, No. 122 / Tuesday, June 24, 2008 / Notices

Dated: June 6, 2008.
Lisa J. Lierheimer,
Senior Permit Biologist, Branch of Permits,
Division of Management Authority.
[FR Doc. E8-14201 Filed 6-23-08; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CA-110]

Meeting of the Central California
Resource Advisory Council Off-
Highway Vehicle Subcommittee

ACTION: Notice of Public Meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Central California Resource Advisory Council Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Subcommittee will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The meeting will be held Saturday, July 12, 2008, at Pea Soup Andersen's Restaurant, Santa Nella, California, from 10 a.m. to noon. Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting. The subcommittee will conduct organizational business and discuss OHV issues for the subcommittee to address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: BLM Folsom Field Office Manager Bill Haigh or BLM Central California Public Affairs Officer David Christy, both at (916) 985-4474.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The twelve-member Central California RAC advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the BLM, on a variety of public land issues associated with public land management in the Central California. The RAC approved formation of an OHV Subcommittee in April 2007. The meeting is open to the public. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance such as sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodations should contact the BLM as indicated above.

Dated: June 17, 2008.
David Christy,
Public Affairs Officer.
[FR Doc. E8-14235 Filed 6-23-08; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AK-963-1430-ET; F-025943]

Public Land Order No. 7710; Extension
of Public Land Order No. 3708, as
Modified by Public Land Order No.
6709; Alaska

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management,
Interior.

ACTION: Public Land Order.

SUMMARY: This order extends the withdrawal created by Public Land Order No. 3708, as modified by Public Land Order No. 6709, and partially revoked by Public Land Order No. 7682, for an additional 20-year period. The extension is necessary to continue protection of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Gilmore Satellite Tracking Station, also known as the Fairbanks Command and Data Acquisition Station, located near Fairbanks, Alaska.

DATES: *Effective Date:* February 15, 2009.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Terrie D. Evarts, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office, 222 W. 7th Avenue, No. 13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7504, 907-271-5630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public Land Order No. 7682 partially revoked 63 acres and the acreage in this extension order reflects that revocation. The withdrawal extended by this order will expire on February 14, 2029, unless, as a result of a review conducted prior to the expiration date pursuant to Section 204(f) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1714(f) (2000), the Secretary determines that the withdrawal shall be further extended.

Order

By virtue of the authority vested in the Secretary of the Interior by Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1714 (2000), it is ordered as follows:
Public Land Order No. 3708 (30 FR 8753 (1965)), as modified by Public Land Order No. 6709 (54 FR 6919 (1989)), and partially revoked by Public Land Order No. 7682 (72 FR 71940 (2007)), which withdrew approximately 8,437 acres of public lands from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining laws, but not from leasing under the mineral leasing laws, is hereby extended for an additional 20-year period until February 14, 2029.

Dated: June 4, 2008.
C. Stephen Allred,
Assistant Secretary—Land and Minerals
Management.
[FR Doc. E8-14216 Filed 6-23-08; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4310-JA-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Intent To Prepare an
Environmental Assessment and
Scoping

AGENCY: National Park Service,
Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment and scoping for transferring jurisdiction of a portion of Fort Dupont Park to the District of Columbia for recreational development and uses and possible amendment of the 2004 Final Management Plan for Fort Circle Parks.

SUMMARY: In accordance with § 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et. seq.*), the National Park Service (NPS) will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for transferring jurisdiction of a portion of NPS property within Fort Dupont Park, part of the Fort Circle Parks, to the District of Columbia (the District) for development of recreational facilities which may result in amending the NPS' 2004 Final Management Plan for Fort Circle Parks.

This also serves as an announcement of a public scoping comment period to run until July 24, 2008. Comments submitted to the Park or through Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) during the public scoping period and at public meetings for this EA will be considered as part of the planning process for the current proposed action. Comments submitted at the public meeting held May 12, 2008, will be considered as part of the planning process for the current proposed action and do not need to be resubmitted.

There is the possibility that the NPS might proceed to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in which case written comments submitted now on the scope of the alternatives and impacts will continue to be considered.

DATES: NPS is soliciting public input for the subject Proposed Action until July 24, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted through the Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) Web site at <http://>

parkplanning.nps.gov/NACE or by mail to: Superintendent, National Capital Parks-East, RE: Fort Dupont Park Land Transfer Proposal, 1900 Anacostia Drive, SE., Washington, DC 20020.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Gayle Hazelwood, Superintendent, National Capital Parks-East, RE: Fort Dupont Park Land Transfer Proposal, at 1900 Anacostia Drive, SE., Washington, DC 20020, by telephone at (202) 690-5127, or by e-mail at gayle_hazelwood@nps.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 376-acre Fort Dupont Park is one of the Civil War Defenses of Washington and is one of the Fort Circle Parks managed by the NPS. In 2004, the NPS completed the Final Management Plan for Fort Circle Parks and an action to transfer these lands to the District will likely result in amendment of that plan. The transfer is to facilitate the development of new recreational facilities and programs on the subject property by the District, including a proposal to create a baseball academy and another to expand an existing indoor ice skating arena. The District's proposal would involve the help of private-sector partners.

The current Proposed Action is to transfer approximately 14 acres of NPS property situated on the north side of Fort Dupont Park along Ely Place in Southeast Washington, DC, to the District. This land is not in an area associated with the Civil War Defense of Washington, and does not contain earthworks or other historic or archeological resources. Once transferred, this property will no longer be part of the Park and no longer be managed or administered by the NPS. This transfer is part of an effort by the District to expand public facilities and recreational opportunities for area youth the NPS supports. The new recreational facilities and programs would be developed and operated by the District and its partners.

Information and comments gathered during scoping and public meetings will be used to identify the range of issues and potential impacts of this proposed action. It may also be used for other planning and decision-making.

Dated: April 23, 2008.

Joseph M. Lawler,

Regional Director, National Capital Region.

[FR Doc. E8-14213 Filed 6-23-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4312-JK-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Inventory Completion: Slater Museum of Natural History, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.
ACTION: Notice.

Notice is here given in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), 25 U.S.C. 3003, of the completion of an inventory of human remains in the possession of the Slater Museum of Natural History, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA. The human remains were removed from Yachats, Lincoln County, OR.

This notice is published as part of the National Park Service's administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA, 25 U.S.C. 3003 (d)(3). The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the museum, institution, or Federal agency that has control of the Native American human remains. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

A detailed assessment of the human remains was made by Slater Museum of Natural History, University of Puget Sound professional staff and a consultant in consultation with representatives of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon; Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation, Oregon; and Coquille Tribe of Oregon.

At an unknown date, human remains representing a minimum of one individual were removed from the vicinity of Yachats, Lincoln County, OR, by Dr. L. E. Hibbard. Dr. Hibbard gave the human remains to Stanley G. Jewett. Mr. Jewett donated the human remains to the Slater Museum in 1955. No known individual was identified. No associated funerary objects are present.

The individual is most likely of Native American ancestry as indicated by morphological features. Writing on the skull indicates that the human remains were removed from the vicinity of "Yahats," which is reasonably believed to be a misspelling of Yachats. The geographical location where the human remains were recovered is consistent with the historically

documented territory of the tribes now represented by the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation, Oregon. Members of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon and Coquille Tribe of Oregon were moved to the Yachats area where they lived from 1859-1875. Absent additional information about the burial period, officials of the Slater Museum of Natural History reasonably believe that the human remains are most likely affiliated with the Alsea Tribe who had villages in the vicinity of Yachats, which had inhabited the area prior to the arrival of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon and Coquille Tribe of Oregon, and continued to inhabit the area afterwards. The Alsea Tribe from the Yachats area are now members of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation, Oregon. Furthermore, based on information provided during consultation with tribal representatives, there is a reasonable belief that the human remains share a common ancestry with members of tribes now represented by the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation, Oregon.

Officials of the Slater Museum of Natural History have determined that, pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001 (9-10), the human remains described above represent the physical remains of one individual of Native American ancestry. Officials of the Slater Museum of Natural History also have determined that, pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001 (2), there is a relationship of shared group identity that can be reasonably traced between the Native American human remains and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation, Oregon.

Representatives of any other Indian tribe that believes itself to be culturally affiliated with the human remains should contact Peter Wimberger, Slater Museum of Natural History, University of Puget Sound, 1500 N. Warner, Tacoma, WA 98416, telephone (253) 879-2784, before July 24, 2008. Repatriation of the human remains to the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation, Oregon may proceed after that date if no additional claimants come forward.

The Slater Museum of Natural History is responsible for notifying the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon; Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation, Oregon; and Coquille Tribe of Oregon that this notice has been published.



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering wise use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The department also promotes the goals of the Take Pride in America campaign by encouraging stewardship and citizen responsibility for the public lands and promoting citizen participation in their care. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

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