Valley Forge National Historical Park

2010 Business Plan
National Park Service Mission
The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and intrinsic values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

Washington's Headquarters, the Pentagon of its time.

NPS PHOTO
Business Planning in the National Park Service

The purpose of business planning in the National Park Service (NPS) is to improve the abilities of parks to more clearly communicate their financial and operational status to principal stakeholders. A business plan answers such questions as: What is the business of this park unit? What are its priorities over the next five years? How will the park allocate its resources to achieve those goals?

The business planning process is undertaken to accomplish three main tasks. First, it presents a clear, detailed picture of the state of park operations and priorities. Second, it outlines the park’s main tasks. First, it presents a clear, detailed picture of the state of park operations and priorities. Second, it outlines the park’s main tasks. Third, it provides a synopsis of the funding sources and expenditures. Finally, it provides the park with a financial projection and specific strategies the park may employ to meet its funding needs. Finally, it provides the park with a financial projection and specific strategies the park may employ to meet its funding needs.

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Key Operating Principles

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Partnerships with cultural organizations allow the park to do more. Partnerships with a range of organizations help the park achieve its mission. In addition to running the bookshop and the Canteen, the Encampment Store, the park’s co-operating association, helps manage a suite of educational programs at the park, facilitates some events, and donates a proportion of its revenue to the park. The Valley Forge Conventions and Visitors Bureau helps staff the Visitor Center, publicizes park activities, and assists with visitor research. The Friends of Valley Forge Park help run events, raise money, and give the park a political voice.

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During the encampment. Varnum’s Quarters, as it would have looked during the winter of 1777–78. Valley Forge represents the spirit of patriotism and independence as well as individual and collective sacrifice, and demonstrates the resolve, tenacity, and determination of the people of the United States to be free. The historic landscapes, structures, objects, and archaeological and natural resources at Valley Forge are tangible links to one of the most defining events in our nation’s history. Here, the Continental Army under Washington’s leadership emerged as a disciplined fighting force. The Valley Forge experience is fundamental to both American history and American myth, and it remains a source of inspiration for Americans and the rest of the world.

In December 1877, a small number of citizens organized to preserve Washington’s Headquarters. This was followed in 1893 by the establishment of Valley Forge as Pennsylvania’s first state park. In December 1965, the Congress authorized the establishment of Valley Forge National Historical Park. In December 1976, the National Park Service assumed control of the park in 1977 with a mandate to “educate and inform present and future generations about the sacrifices and achievements of General George Washington and the Continental Army at Valley Forge, the people, events, and legacy of the American Revolution, through the preservation of the cultural and natural resources that embody and commemorate the Valley Forge experience and the American Revolution, and provision of opportunities for enhanced understanding.”

**Mission Statement**

The purpose of Valley Forge National Historical Park is to educate the American people about one of the most defining events in our nation’s history and to preserve the natural and cultural resources that commemorate the encampment of the Continental Army at Valley Forge in 1777–78.

**Enabling Legislation**

President Gerald Ford established Valley Forge National Historical Park on July 4, 1976. The National Park Service assumed control of the park in 1977 with a mandate to “educate and inform present and future generations about the sacrifices and achievements of General George Washington and the Continental Army at Valley Forge, the people, events, and legacy of the American Revolution, through the preservation of the cultural and natural resources that embody and commemorate the Valley Forge experience and the American Revolution, and provision of opportunities for enhanced understanding.”

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The majority of Valley Forge’s funding comes from two main sources: funds appropriated by Congress to cover labor costs and annually recurring non-labor expenses (“Appropriated Base”) and funds awarded to the park for special projects and capital expenses (“Appropriated Non-Base”). In FY 2009, Valley Forge’s expenditures totaled $11.36 million. Accounting for $6.15 million of Valley Forge’s expenditures, Appropriated Base Funding totaled $5.07 million. Accounting for $5,065,906 of Appropriated Non-Base expenditures and 24.5% of the park’s total expenditures in FY 2009. Appropriated Non-Base funding is awarded on a competitive basis among all national parks and thus varies from year to year. In 2009, Appropriated Non-Base Funding totaled $5.07 million for the park, or 44.6% of the park’s total expenditures.

Valley Forge’s appropriations support the majority of its personnel costs. Of the park’s $6,145,655 in Appropriated Base Funding, $4,245,467 or 69.3% supported personnel, with $1,023,000 set aside for employee housing. Donations are a primary source of revenue for the park. Each of these categories constituted less than 1% of Valley Forge’s total expenditures in FY 2009.

Base Funding History

Like most national park units, Valley Forge National Historical Park relies heavily on base appropriated funds to operate. Base funding has remained relatively constant year to year when adjusted for inflation. The graph below compares the base budget in nominal dollars to constant 1999 dollars.

To increase spending flexibility and allocate funds to the greatest need, Valley Forge has worked to reduce the amount of its base budget spent on personnel. It has decreased the proportion from 96% in 2004 to just under 93% in 2009.

Personnel Resources

In FY 2009, Valley Forge operated with 62 full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees. An FTE equals 2,080 hours of work per year. The park also relies on Volunteers-In-Parks (VIPs). In FY 2009, VIPs volunteered approximately 350,950 hours at the park, performing crucial tasks such as greeting and educating visitors and monitoring and maintaining completed trails. Using the current NPS value of $20.25 per hour of volunteer work, the estimated value of volunteer contributions to the park in the last fiscal year was $71,651.

Visitation

In FY 2009, approximately 4.5 million visitors came to Valley Forge National Historical Park. These visitors participated in many programs and activities, ranging from learning about the encampment era and natural resources to hiking the trails and fishing in Valley Creek. The majority of the park’s visitors come from May through October, with visitation numbers dipping lowest in January. To match the increase in visitors during peak months, the park hires seasonal staff and enlists the help of volunteers. Visitations levels in FY 2009 were the highest recorded since 2004, with numbers trending upward from a low of 1.09 million visitors in FY 2004.

Key Considerations for Valley Forge

Inherent factors such as park location, historical legacies, and government regulation create certain advantages and challenges specific to Valley Forge National Historical Park. These visitors participated in many programs and activities, ranging from learning about the encampment era and natural resources to hiking the trails and fishing in Valley Creek. The majority of the park’s visitors come from May through October, with visitation numbers dipping lowest in January. To match the increase in visitors during peak months, the park hires seasonal staff and enlists the help of volunteers. Visitation levels in FY 2009 were the highest recorded since 2004, with numbers trending upward from a low of 1.09 million visitors in FY 2004.
of its history, many visitors come to enjoy recreational and natural resource-related activities as well. Having different kinds of park users gives the park a broad base of supporters, as well as the challenge of serving their diverse interests.

Impact on the Park from the Surrounding Areas

While the park receives more visitors because of its position as a suburban oasis, being surrounded by development also takes a toll. High traffic volumes flow through Valley Forge, raising safety issues, congestion, and pollution. The Schuylkill River and Valley Creek watersheds are impacted by surface runoff from manmade landscapes outside park jurisdiction. Sprawl and high-rise buildings impair the view from some points in the park. The proposed expansion of I-76 threatens the natural tree screen currently buffers the view of the highway from the vantage points along the Outer Line Defenses and the General Wayne statue.

Open Access

There are 14 points of entry to the park, and many of the roads that run through Valley Forge are state-owned. Therefore, the park cannot build entrance gates at the park’s boundaries. This constraint limits the park’s ability to identify itself as a national park to visitors and commuters entering the park in vehicles. These open boundaries, however, make it easier for the local community to access and use the park frequently, a benefit which may increase the number of people who have a significant stake in the park’s long-term success.

As the area around Valley Forge becomes increasingly urbanized, the importance of the park’s natural and recreational resources is heightened (left).
Combating Invasive Species

Student Conservation Association crews, the Youth Conservation Corps, and other volunteers are stalwarts in controlling some of the park’s most rampant invasive species, such as the rusty crayfish. The rusty crayfish was first found in Valley Creek in 2008, and the Crayfish Corps was set up as a volunteer program in 2009 to remove them and to monitor the native crayfish population. Rusty crayfish are aggressive and will eliminate native crayfish if left unchecked. Since Crayfish Corps was set up, thousands of rusty crayfish have been removed from Valley Creek, helping native species to succeed in Valley Forge’s only Exceptional Value Waterway. Just as important, scores of young volunteers are learning firsthand about stream ecology.

Planning for Preservation and the Visitor Experience

Planning and Resource Management works with partners, particularly local governments and issues coalitions, to identify and mitigate threats to park resources and visitors from decisions and development beyond park boundaries. Growth upstream of the park and the planned widening of the Pennsylvania Turnpike could affect Valley Creek and important viewsheds. The potential expansion of the Valley Forge sewer main through the Valley Creek corridor could impair cultural and natural resources. Increases in traffic congestion affect regional residents and visitors.

Restoring Disturbed Park Land

Part of the land that is now Valley Forge National Historical Park was impaired prior to designation as a national park. The Grand Parade area was home to numerous large 19th-century quarries, and subsequently became the site of an asbestos products factory that dumped toxic wastes in and around the quarries. After more than a decade of legal negotiations, site investigation, and planning, the clean-up of the asbestos-contaminated areas will commence in 2011. The clean-up is the precursor to full restoration of this historic landscape.

Integrating Historic Artifacts into the Visitor Experience

Valley Forge preserves over 360,000 historic artifacts. While a small proportion of these are on display at the visitor center and at key points around the park, the visitor experience could be enriched further by using more of these artifacts in interpretation and education. A budget request for a rehabilitated visitor center has been submitted, and if approved, will enable Valley Forge to increase more of its historic objects. In the meantime, the park makes additional objects available when possible through temporary exhibits and “vault tours.” Creating web-based access also is a priority.

Incorporating the Northern Part of the Park

The 1777-78 encampment site was divided by the Schuylkill River, with the winter encampment to the south and commissary operations and the pre-departure June encampment to the north. Presently, there is no easy way to get from the southern part to the northern part without leaving the park. This difficulty of access and relative lack of interpretive facilities makes the northern part feel cut off. The park is working with partners to construct a footbridge over the river, to complete trail connections, and to add audio-based tours and wayfinding.

Restoring Biodiversity

Long-term plans call for restoration of the natural biodiversity of the park. More immediately, inventory and monitoring continues to enhance knowledge about park resources and changes in resource conditions over time. Threats to the diversity of plant and animal communities in the park include an abundant white-tailed deer population, the continued spread of invasive non-native plants and animals, and factors associated with urbanization of the surrounding environment (e.g., increases in impervious surface areas). A “White-tailed Deer Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement” was approved in October 2009, and implementation is expected to begin during the 2010-2011 fall/winter season. Planning and Resource Management also has developed several new volunteer programs to assist with implementing management actions, such as the Crayfish Corps, which controls the invasive rusty crayfish in Valley Creek, and Weed Warriors, which battles invasive non-native plants. The team works communally with partners to achieve park management objectives.

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Successes and Challenges

Adapting to the Evolving Interests of Visitors

Valley Forge was originally designated a national park because of its historical significance. While the park’s history remains a key focus, Valley Forge is also remarkable for its natural biodiversity. Its historical significance and natural resources, others appreciate the park’s recreational opportunities. While some visitors value Valley Forge because of its historical significance, others appreciate the park’s natural beauty. Valley Forge was again shown the enthusiasm of its visitors and ran a new youth outreach program, offering a range of park activities for two local summer camps. Making sure that the park stays relevant to all generations is fundamental to its success.

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The Visitor and Resource Protection division patrols the park every day of the year to protect the park’s natural and historic resources and its visitors. Park rangers trained in law enforcement are equipped to respond to incidents at multiple park sites, from the multi-surface trail network to the high-traffic roads that run through Valley Forge. In FY 2009, low enforcement rangers responded to more than 2,000 incidents within the park, the vast majority of which stemmed from traffic violations. The number of serious visitor injuries at Valley Forge National Historical Park—0.6 per 100,000 recreational visits—was significantly lower than the overall National Park Service’s average in FY 2009.

Successes and Challenges

New cost-reducing strategies and partnerships within the Visitor and Resource Protection division have been implemented in the past five fiscal years. These programs have increased the effectiveness of the division both in managing expenses and responding to incidents within the park.

Leasing Law Enforcement Vehicles from GSA

The Visitor and Resource Protection division has the highest utilization of vehicles among the park’s divisions, and the reliability of the division’s fleet is essential to the division’s ability to perform routine duties and to respond to emergencies. The General Services Administration’s vehicle leasing program was implemented by the park in 2008 to increase the efficiency and reliability of the park’s fleet, ensuring greater safety for the law enforcement rangers (who were driving older vehicles), and making vehicle maintenance costs more predictable for the park. A primary benefit to the park in leasing vehicles came in the average age of the leased vehicles. In 2008, the average age of the park’s owned vehicle fleet was ten years; currently, the average age of its leased vehicles is three years, translating to the latest safety features, fuel efficiency, and reliability. A younger, leased fleet also has meant a reduction in time spent maintaining the vehicles. In 2008, more than 20,000 hours were spent maintaining the park’s vehicles, compared to fewer than 10,000 hours currently spent on maintenance of the current fleet. This has freed up time for park maintenance to address other priorities within the park.

Partnerships with Montgomery County

In 2009, the Visitor and Resource Protection division switched from an internal dispatch office to a partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety. In FY 2009, Montgomery County enforcement rangers responded to more than 1,000 incidents throughout the year by acting as “eyes and ears” on the trails. In addition, the park serves as a field training location for prospective law enforcement rangers.

A GSA vehicle leasing program has enabled the park to reduce vehicle maintenance costs while increasing the reliability of the park’s fleet. Over five million commuters drive through the park each year (opposite page). Over five million commuters drive through the park each year (opposite page). Over five million commuters drive through the park each year (opposite page). Over five million commuters drive through the park each year (opposite page).

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•  FPS Alarm Monitoring System—partnership with GSA center in Philadelphia
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Expenditure by Fund Source, FY 2009

Revenue, $0

Appropriated Non-base, $9,706

Appropriated Base, $1,031,126

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Expenditure by Type, FY 2009

Personnel Salary, $963,346

Travel and Transportation, $13,877

Printing, $44,807

Utility, $5,848

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Maximizing Current Staff Levels

With a reduction in the number of full-time law enforcement officers over the past several years, the division uses overtime to help ensure that rangers are always supported with nearby backup during park-operating hours and special events. Six months out of the year, during late spring through early fall, the division hires seasonal rangers to match the increase in recreational visitors.

Partnerships and volunteers in the Park Watch program and law enforcement rangers throughout the year are acting as “eyes and ears” on the trails. In addition, the park serves as a field training location for prospective law enforcement rangers.

Partnerships:

•  FPS Alarm Monitoring System—partnership with GSA center in Philadelphia
•  Emergency response cooperative agreements with local law enforcement
•  Montgomery County dispatch
•  Police departments.
The Facility Operations and Maintenance division conducts all day-to-day activities required to ensure the continued operation and use of the park as well as all repair and upkeep necessary to realize the full useful life of park assets, including roads, buildings, trails, utility systems, equipment, and vehicles. Examples of day-to-day activities include mowing, plowing park roads, clearing debris from trails, custodial operations, and performing regular inspections of all electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems within the park. Cyclical asset-improving activities may include reconstructing a road or monument preservation/construction projects.

Successes and Challenges
The Facility Operations and Maintenance division has implemented systems and strategies to increase the efficiency of the division and the effectiveness of the park as a whole. Prioritization of Buildings and Structures
By maintaining a priority index of park buildings and structures, the Facility Operations and Maintenance division is better able to plan and prioritize necessary maintenance or major renovations for the park’s assets. Operating under this prioritization mechanism, the park enhanced the visitor experience through the restoration of historic structures: A $6.2 million rehabilitation of Washington’s Headquarters area and the Valley Forge Train Station, completed in May 2009, created a series of additional interpretive offerings and historic spaces for the public to explore.

Managing Trails-Maintenance
The Facility Operations and Maintenance division manages the activities required to prolong the life of the park’s 27-mile trail system (7.5 miles paved, 19.5 unpaved). Volunteer groups help manage the park’s extensive network of unpaved trails. These volunteers monitor the state of the trails and perform necessary maintenance that does not require the use of heavy machinery. In FY 2009, the Appalachian Mountain Club provided almost 300 hours of volunteer time. These volunteers enable the division to

Facility Operations and Maintenance

Resources at a Glance
Staff
26.6 full-time equivalent FY 2009 expenditures
$7,243,000 total

Inventory
Major assets
• Heave equipment and tools
• 12 miles of roads
• 19 miles of trail
• 259 park buildings
• 24 park restrooms
• 95 acres of maintained grounds

Partnerships include but are not limited to:
• Appalachian Mountain Club
• Ernest Eadeh Enterprise
• Lockheed Martin, Network of Volunteer Association
• The Friends of Valley Forge Park
• 10,420 volunteer hours

Facility Operations and Maintenance Expenditure by Fund Source, FY 2009

Facility Operations and Maintenance Expenditure by Type, FY 2009

Facility Operations and Maintenance
The Facility Operations and Maintenance division conducts all day-to-day activities required to ensure the continued operation and use of the park as well as all repair and upkeep necessary to realize the full useful life of park assets, including roads, buildings, trails, utility systems, equipment, and vehicles. Examples of day-to-day activities include mowing, plowing park roads, clearing debris from trails, custodial operations, and performing regular inspections of all electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems within the park. Cyclical asset-improving activities may include reconstructing a road or monument preservation/construction projects.

Successes and Challenges
The Facility Operations and Maintenance division has implemented systems and strategies to increase the efficiency of the division and the effectiveness of the park as a whole.

Prioritization of Buildings and Structures
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Improving Environmental Sustainability

Keystone in step with the National Park Service’s desire to be a leader in environmental management, the Facility Operations and Management division has applied green standards to everyday park activities and historic structure rehabilitation. The division established a Green Team in 2007 that reviews the sustainability of park operations and projects and supports green improvements. Implemented improvements include the custodial staff’s switch to environmentally-friendly cleaning products and the use of bio-fuel for many of the maintenance vehicles.

The park also requires that sustainable best practices be written into its contracted projects, keeping in mind LEED standards for any new construction or rehabilitation. Opportunities for further green park operations still exist. Over the next several years, the division will be challenged with balancing the financial costs of green improvements with the park’s goal of advancing sustainable best practices in its operations.

Self-financing programs are popular with visitors and don’t place additional burdens on the park’s budget above tax. The Valley Forge Train Station has been rehabilitated in part with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds (above).

Reinvesting in the Past

In part with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, the Forge Train Station has been rehabilitated on the park’s budget (above top). The Valley Forge Park System is investigating the restoration of the park’s historic assets.

Although the park prioritizes the maintenance of its assets, the sheer number of historic structures that need preservation and restoration leads to challenges in managing the related maintenance costs. The Facility Operations and Maintenance division has leveraged grants and donations to help address those costs. For example, in 2007-2008, Save America’s Treasures funded initial preservation steps for Knox’s Quarters, constructing a new roof and providing interior stabilization work for the encampment-era structure. The park also is investigating the possible renovation of certain historic buildings to park-friendly organizations, thereby creating cost-sharing relationships for maintenance that would ultimately aid in the preservation and restoration of the park’s historic assets.

Facility Operations and Maintenance division will tackle those challenges in the coming years.

Restoring the Historic Valley Forge Train Station

Self-financing programs are popular with visitors and don’t place additional burdens on the park’s budget above tax. The Valley Forge Train Station has been rehabilitated in part with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds (above).
Managing Park Property Effectively

The many buildings preserved by Valley Forge National Historical Park are a challenge to maintain and preserve. The Management and Administration team considers ways to keep historic buildings in the best condition possible. In some cases, this means leasing our buildings to private organizations that take on responsibility for maintaining the properties. In 2009, the park entered into a 40-year lease of the David Walker Farmstead with the Montessori Children’s House of Valley Forge. The agreement put $4 million of much-needed investment into the 19th-century buildings, which have now been transformed from derelict properties into a school. This lease has also built a strong foundation for relationships between the park and the families whose children attend the school, via programmatic connections and automatic family memberships in the Friends of Valley Forge. The Management and Administration team continues to look for similar opportunities that will aid the rehabilitation and preservation of the park’s historic buildings.

Multiplying Staff Efforts

While Valley Forge staff work hard to achieve the park’s mission, there are ways to multiply staff efforts by working with volunteers and partners. In 2009, Valley Forge benefited from more than 50,500 volunteer hours, with nearly 3,000 volunteers working across all of the park’s divisions. This represented an increase in volunteer hours of 282% compared to 2004. This level of involvement is a valuable indicator of the park’s importance to its community. While recruiting and coordinating volunteers takes staff time, the impact that these volunteers have on park preservation and education activities is tremendous. Understanding this, the park created a full-time Volunteers-In-Parks Coordinator position, dedicating a member of park staff to recruit volunteers and match them with interesting opportunities. Strengthening the volunteer program also is essential to increase connections between citizens and the park.

Partnerships also play important roles at Valley Forge. For example, while The Friends of Valley Forge Park provides education and preservation volunteers, the organization also raises funds for park programs and awareness in the community. The Management and Administration division will continue to build strong relationships with volunteers, partners, and other constituents who are dedicated to the park.

The Friends of Valley Forge

The Friends of Valley Forge was chartered in 1976. Its mission is to protect and preserve Valley Forge National Historical Park through advocacy for the park, raising public awareness, and providing volunteers for educational programs and park projects. The Friends began a revitalization of the organization in 2006. Membership has since grown from 50 to nearly 1,000. The contribution The Friends make to programming at Valley Forge has also grown. The Friends now take a leading role in organizing the annual Revolutionary Run and sponsor the park’s cell phone tour. The organization donated $50,000 for the renovation of the Valley Forge Train Station in 2008 and another $50,000 for extending trails. In summer 2010, The Friends hosted “An Evening with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin,” together with the Young Friends, organized a public archaeology evening at Washington’s Headquarters.
Preserve and Restore Historic Landscapes and Earthworks

Prior to the establishment of Valley Forge as a National Historical Park, quarrying and other industrial operations in the area significantly damaged the historic landscape and geological features of the park. To restore the park’s cultural landscapes to its encampment-era form, the quarries on the Grand Parade are to be filled to their historic contours, after an asbestos remediation plan has been put into action starting in 2011. Encampment-period earthworks and fortifications that have been stabilized and preserved will continue to be protected by tall grass cover to prevent erosion and discourage trampling, and by educating visitors about the significance and fragility of earthworks. To minimize artificial lighting within the park, lighting will be limited to those areas where security, basic human safety, and specific cultural resource requirements must be met. Vegetation or other buffers adjacent to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and U.S. 422 will also be implemented to maintain the historic vista of the park as these roadways are widened in the coming years. Selected areas of high interpretive value, such as Muhlenberg’s Brigade, will be rehabilitated to evoke encampment-era landscapes.

Assess and Stabilize Archaeological Sites

Many archaeological sites and resources within the park have been stabilized and protected against destruction from vegetation, erosion, and inappropriate visitor use. In the next five years, research and fieldwork in this area will continue. For example, the P.C. Knox Estate house is being rehabilitated and used as an event space, yielding revenue that could be used to pay for its ongoing maintenance. The park will consider ways to educate visitors about the significance and fragility of archaeological sites and resources.

Improve Public Access to the Park’s Revolution-era Museum Collection

A significant Revolution-era collection is housed, organized, and protected at the park. Within the past five years, collection items have been documented and stored following contemporary museum, archival, and conservation practices. To increase public access, a portion of the collection has been photographed or digitally scanned. Digitization will be completed as funds are available. The resulting web-based catalog will enable researchers and scholars to more effectively use the park’s collection for further study. The park will also develop an emergency plan for the collection, should it need to be moved unexpectedly.
While Valley Forge National Historical Park was established due to its historic significance, the natural resources, the abundant natural resources within the park create a rich bio-reserve within the surrounding suburban development. Park staff work to protect the park’s ecosystem, relying on scientific monitoring and management practices to help plan, design, and implement long-term preservation strategies.

Implement an Integrated, Long Term Vital Signs Monitoring Program
Over the next five years, the park will continue to develop and implement the National Park Service’s Vital Signs Monitoring Program in cooperation with the Mid-Atlantic Inventory and Monitoring Network. This long-term ecological monitoring program identifies a suite of ecological indicators that, when tracked over time, help to identify ecological trends that reveal the overall health of natural resources within the park. The park’s goal is to develop and implement monitoring of these vital signs for the park. Currently monitoring programs for over 50% of selected vital signs are funded and in various stages of development. Funded monitoring programs focus on air quality, weather and climate, water quality, breeding birds, wildlife, and forest health. By developing its Vital Signs program further, the park will have the information necessary to make educated scientific and strategic decisions for its natural resource preservation initiatives.

Restore the Natural Biodiversity of the Park
The park is committed to restoring the natural abundances, diversity, dynamics, and distributions of native plant and animal populations within the park. The park has spent several years developing a Deer Management Plan that will be implemented beginning in fiscal year 2011. The deer population management practices to help plan, design, and implement long-term preservation strategies.

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Monitor and Restore Air and Water Quality
The park participates in protecting and enhancing air quality in the Philadelphia area, thereby mitigating the harmful effects of air pollutants on the park’s visitor traffic, adjacent regions, and visitors within the park. Over the next five years, additional regional trade will be linked to the park’s tourism and recreation activities in ecologically sensitive areas as well as remediating unauthorized trails.

Utilize Sustainable Design, Construction Methods, Techniques, and Materials
As a national park, Valley Forge has an obligation to demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship. Keeping in step with many sustainable best practices, the park will continue to assess its operations and facilities to improve the sustainability of operations and construction projects. The park’s Green Team completed an energy use audit of the park’s administration buildings and further developed its existing energy management plan. In addition, the park’s Green Team completed an energy use audit of the park’s administration buildings and further developed its existing energy management plan. In addition, the park worked to mitigate the visual effects of urban development along its boundaries.

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Valley Forge has applied for funding for major renovation of the visitor center. In 2011, the park will complete rehabilitating portions of its most heavily used trail, the Joseph Plumb Martin Trail. The park will partner with community groups and local organizations to address trail enforcement issues and strike an appropriate balance between closing unauthorized social trails and connecting some illegal trails to authorized, park-maintained trails.

In summer 2010, the park procured bag dispensers and bins to encourage dog walkers to clean up after their pets. These will be placed near four heavy usage points around the park. This equipment will be evaluated after a six-month period, at which time the park will consider installing similar facilities for other trails.

Valley Forge, including a day camp for youth based on the Junior Ranger program and educational programs for two local summer camps outside the park. Based on its experience of these day camps and other youth programs, the park will determine how best to meet the needs of youth the future. The park will consider hosting day camps, residential summer camps, and other youth programs run by park staff or partner organizations, and then will add the most appropriate activities to its suite of programs.

In 2011, the park will consider installing similar facilities for other trails. From providing informative, educational, and interpretive opportunities to facilitating the use of trails and ensuring public safety, the park will work to enhance the experiences of its 15 million annual visitors. This includes those visitors primarily interested in cultural resources, natural resources, or recreational resources, and those interested in all three. It also means providing programming for visitors of different ages. The park strives to respect its visitors’ needs and desired park experiences differ.

Over the next five years, the park will continue to evaluate various types of visitor trial use to determine the impact of these activities on the natural resources of the park. For example, networks of illegal bike trails within the north side of the park are detrimental to many of the natural resources found in that area and are a challenge to the law enforcement officers who monitor visitor safety on trails. The park will partner with community groups and local organizations to address trail enforcement issues and strike an appropriate balance between closing unauthorized social trails and connecting some illegal trails to authorized, park-maintained trails.

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Linking the North and South Sections of the Park

Working with PennDOT and the Upper Merion Transportation Authority, a pedestrian and bicycle bridge will be built across the Schuylkill River between the north and south sides of the park. To help further integrate the two sides, the described trail improvement actions will take on the north side. As a result, visitors will be able to see how trails on both sides of the river connect, and they will be able to access interpretive information about the cultural and natural resources of Valley Forge as a whole.

Provide More Opportunities for Youth and Young Adults

In summer 2010, the park offered four new programs to youth at Valley Forge, including a day camp for youth based on the Junior Ranger program and educational programs for two local summer camps outside the park. Based on its experience of these day camps and other youth programs, the park will determine how best to meet the needs of youth the future. The park will consider hosting day camps, residential summer camps, and other youth programs run by park staff or partner organizations, and then will add the most appropriate activities to its suite of programs.

Besides coming to the park as visitors, many young adults work at the park as volunteers, interns, or seasonal staff. The park held interviews and focus groups with many of these park supporters at the end of the 2009 and 2010 summer seasons. Taking into account the results of these interviews, the park will take steps to make sure that the experiences of young adults working at Valley Forge are interesting and satisfying, that seasonal staff will consider returning to the park in future summers, and that these young adults will think about working for the National Park Service in the long term.

Relaunch the Visitor Center

Valley Forge has applied for funding for major renovation of the visitor center. An expanded visitor center will orient and better prepare visitors to directly experience the history, resources, and recreational opportunities within the park. The project will expand and revitalize the exhibits, incorporating more historic artifacts and integrating interpretive themes with key places in the park, to help visitors appreciate life at the 1777-78 winter encampment. The new visitor center will be more accessible to disabled visitors.

Restoring the Landscape of Valley Forge

In 2011, Valley Forge will start implementation of its asbestos mitigation plan, thereby bringing the physical work of restoring the park’s historic Grand Parade. This plan will restore 82 acres of upland to full and open-park use. The park will investigate options for closing County Line Road and Gulph Road, which are primarily used by commuters rather than visitors, to reduce traffic within park boundaries.

Valley Forge has applied for funding for a major renovation of the visitor center.
Ensure Organizational Effectiveness of the Park

Ensuring organizational effectiveness at Valley Forge contributes to the achievement of all other park goals. Valley Forge needs knowledgeable, skilled, motivated staff, and appropriate financial resources to achieve its goals and, ultimately, its mission. Many of the park’s activities and projects involve setting up cross-divisional teams to respond to cross-divisional challenges.

Carry out Visitor Research

Valley Forge needs to know more about its visitors to have confidence that it is meeting their needs. The park will apply for funding to pay for a comprehensive, scientifically valid visitor survey. The results will inform multiple park activities and help the park use resources effectively to enhance public use, enjoyment, and experience at Valley Forge.

Enrich the Workplace

As an agency, the National Park Service has not scored well in recent employee surveys about job satisfaction. At Valley Forge, park management wants to ensure that its staff members are satisfied with their jobs because staff satisfaction and commitment are fundamental to ensuring that natural and cultural resources are well preserved and that visitors have positive experiences. The park conducted interviews with a number of employees in summer 2010 and, based on the results of this research, will take a number of workplace enrichment actions to fully develop the skills of first-line supervisors, to make sure employees feel valued, and to improve internal communications. Specific examples include instituting a cross-divisional supervisors’ work group, better publicizing the park’s staff awards policy, prioritizing staff training and development opportunities, and streamlining administrative processes. The park also will undertake a management-union joint survey of staff at Valley Forge to understand what the park should do to make Valley Forge a better place to work.

Set Up a Trails Team

Valley Forge’s trails are a valuable resource used by many visitors. Trails are currently managed by various staff in different park divisions, with additional support from volunteers and local, trails-focused organizations. To create a unified approach to trail management, the park will set up a dedicated trails team of staff from each of the park’s divisions. This team will be primarily responsible for ensuring that trails are monitored and well-maintained and that trail users have the facilities and resources they need to have an enjoyable time. The trails team will also offer new ideas on how to improve trails planning and visitor experiences in the long run.

Advance Environmental Sustainability Work at Valley Forge

As a national park, Valley Forge has an obligation to demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship. To ensure it is meeting this obligation, Valley Forge will take steps to make its operations more environmentally sustainable. Some of the steps the park will take to reduce energy use and improve the sustainability of construction projects are outlined above, in the “Preserve Park Natural Resources” section. In addition, management will take steps to increase staff and visitor awareness of the park’s commitment to environmental sustainability, to encourage green behavior, and to build capacity for future environmental sustainability initiatives at the park. For example, the park will hold annual training sessions for staff on “how to be green” while working at Valley Forge, and will experiment with new ways to communicate with visitors and staff about the park’s environmental sustainability work. It will also consider appointing a part-time environmental sustainability coordinator and carrying out a full environmental audit of operations at Valley Forge.

Develop Additional Sources of Revenue

The park has started to develop new sources of revenue and self-funding programs over the last few years. For example, large groups of visitors can now pay for bus step-on tours with a ranger or guide, and visitors can hire bicycles to tour the park.
Valley Forge will continue this trend over the next five years. In particular, it will consider leasing buildings or making them available for the paying extents to increase revenue flows to the park and help cover the costs of historic buildings maintenance.

**Expand Community Engagement**

Over the next five years, Valley Forge will strengthen key relationships and build new ones. Staff will continue to be encouraged to lead in preserving and interpreting park resources and in engaging the community to achieve the park’s mission. Individual employees will continue to develop personal stewardship goals with the help of their supervisors.

To benefit from shared knowledge and experience and to contribute to the community, the park will develop stronger relationships with nearby visitor attractions. Such relationships will enable organizations to share good management practices and give staff short-term development opportunities in different contexts. They will also assure that visitors know about other regional historic and natural resource sites in the area. Valley Forge will develop closer ties among neighboring and regional parks, historic sites, and recreation areas, including Independence National Historical Park, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, The John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, and Brandywine Battlefield.

Volunteers play vital roles in preserving cultural and natural resources and in enhancing the visitor experience. Volunteering also gives stakeholders a real chance to take personal responsibility for caring for our heritage. Valley Forge will continue to develop innovative volunteer opportunities and to recruit volunteers from diverse backgrounds, ultimately fostering awareness and support for the park.

Over the next five years, Valley Forge will continue to maintain strong relationships with The Encampment Store, the Valley Forge Convention and Visitors Bureau, and The Friends of Valley Forge Park. Those partnerships are of high-roles for the insight they bring and because they magnify the park’s own efforts, ultimately providing a leveraging effect on the fulfillment of the park’s mission. The park will also work on traffic and transportation issues with partners including PennDOT, SEPTA, Chester and Montgomery counties, and the five townships. The park will take lead in initiatives with partners to protect and restore the Valley Creek Watershed.

Valley Forge National Historical Park’s funding comes from four main sources:

**Appropriated Base:** Funds allocated by Congress and intended for permanent staff and recurring expenses.

**Appropriated Non-base:** Funds allocated by Congress to support projects, awarded competitively and often shared across the park’s network or region.

**Reimbursable:** Funds resulting from cost recovery for services to other agencies.

**Revenue:** Funds resulting from fees and/or donations.

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**Financial Plan**

Even with the federal pay freeze in 2011 and 2012, the cost to operate a national park unit is expected to increase due to anticipated benefit cost increases, employee advancement across the salary schedules, and anticipated inflation affecting utilities, supplies, and equipment. Valley Forge can absorb those cost increases in 2012 by reducing seasonal staffing by 10 positions. If pay increases return in 2013, Valley Forge has the ability to stay within its funding by eliminating an additional 15 seasonal positions and reducing spending on materials, supplies and equipment.

**Valley Forge National Historical Park Financial Projections, FY 2009–FY 2013**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operations Funding</strong></td>
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<td>$1,251,079</td>
<td>$1,261,801</td>
<td>$1,287,037</td>
<td>$1,265,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total ($)</strong></td>
<td>$6,144,510</td>
<td>$6,399,380</td>
<td>$6,399,057</td>
<td>$6,396,704</td>
<td>$6,400,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labor Cost for Year-Round Employees (%)</strong></td>
<td>77.61%</td>
<td>75.18%</td>
<td>74.83%</td>
<td>76.00%</td>
<td>78.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labor Cost for Seasonal Employees (%)</strong></td>
<td>5.29%</td>
<td>5.27%</td>
<td>5.46%</td>
<td>3.88%</td>
<td>1.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Labor Cost (%)</strong></td>
<td>17.10%</td>
<td>19.55%</td>
<td>19.72%</td>
<td>20.12%</td>
<td>19.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (%)</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The financial plan depicted below assumes no level operations funding through FY 2013.
Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the entire staff at Valley Forge National Historical Park for their generous support throughout the business planning process, including:

Mike Caldwell, Superintendent
Barbara Pollarine, Deputy Superintendent
Deirdre Gibson, Chief of Planning and Resource Management
Jennifer McNeirney, Chief of Maintenance
Gregg Tinkham, Supervisory Park Ranger
Pat Madden, Business Manager
Jennifer Jarrett, Business Management Specialist
Dana Moore, former Business Manager
Colleen Todd, former Management Assistant

Business Plan Consultants
Ashley Pickard, Jack School of Business, Dartmouth College
Adam Swinburn, Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan

National Park Service
Bruce Shaffer, National Park Service Comptroller
Chris Clatterbuck, Jason Gibson, Kristen Jontos, Lena McDowall, Elena McPeak, and Grace Stephens, Business Management Group

Conservation Internship Program at the Student Conservation Association

Photographs
Front cover: Living history enthusiasts at Muhlenberg’s Brigade huts. NPS PHOTO
Back cover: Philander Chase Knox house under renovation. NPS PHOTO

You Can Be Involved in Valley Forge National Historical Park

Many of the actions identified as supporting the park’s strategic goals will be implemented with existing park staff and federal funding. However, there are a number of new initiatives that can be enriched through ideas and participation from volunteers and partners:

- Recruiting and supporting volunteers
- Developing new technology to integrate trail use and the history of Valley Forge
- Designing youth programs, potentially to include a residential nature and/or history camp
- Conducting visitor research
- Educating visitors about preservation
- Developing new sources of revenue, particularly through the use of park buildings
- Funding environmental sustainability actions
- Sharing knowledge and expertise across visitor attractions
- Protecting and restoring specific historic buildings
- Implementing the Vital Signs natural resources monitoring program
- Utilizing new media to engage all visitors

Learn more about how to volunteer, the Friends of Valley Forge Park, and the Encampment store at:
http://www.nps.gov/vafo/supportyourpark/index.htm

NPS PHOTO
Valley Forge National Historical Park
1400 North Outer Line Drive
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406

www.nps.gov/vafo