



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Northeast Region

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National Park Service News Release

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National Park Service to Conduct Fort Monroe Meeting

Hampton, Virginia — The National Park Service (NPS) will conduct a public meeting to discuss its recently begun reconnaissance survey of historic resources at Fort Monroe. The study was requested by 2nd District Congresswoman Thelma Drake and is intended to assess whether a more detailed study of the Fort should be recommended for authorization by the United States Congress.

The meeting will be held on December 6, 2007 in the Northampton Community Center located at 1435-A Todds Lane, Hampton, Virginia. It will begin at 6:30 P.M. The survey team from the Philadelphia-based Northeast Regional Office of the NPS will be present to provide information regarding how the survey will be conducted, receive comments, and answer questions from interested citizens and organizations.

NPS Northeast Regional Director Dennis R. Reidenbach describes the survey as, “an important opportunity to take a first look at whether Congress should consider evaluating the possibility of a new federal role in the protection of Fort Monroe’s nationally significant historic resources.” Reidenbach said, “Regardless of any potential future NPS involvement, the extensive resources and important American stories associated with Fort Monroe deserve to be protected and interpreted for public understanding and appreciation of current and future generations.”

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Fort Monroe is scheduled to be closed by the Army in 2011 and plans for its future uses are being developed by the Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority which is paying for the NPS survey through Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment funding. The Authority and the NPS Northeast Region executed a Memorandum of Agreement for the survey on November 9, 2007.

Reconnaissance surveys undertaken by the NPS normally take from six to nine months. The Fort Monroe survey will involve site visits and research by a NPS interdisciplinary team of planners, historians, architectural historians, collections and archives specialists, and those with expertise in park operations. The results of the survey will be transmitted to Congresswoman Drake with a recommendation as to whether Congress should consider authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to undertake a full-scale Special Resource Study. This more thorough analysis would determine if Fort Monroe, or portions of its historic resources, can meet the stringent criteria for congressional designation as a unit of the National Park System. NPS special resource studies assess whether the resource being studied is nationally significant, suitable and feasible as an addition to the National Park System, and whether NPS management is the appropriate future course of action to protect and interpret the resource. The United States Congress designates new units of the National Park System through legislation. Further information about criteria for parkland can be found at: <http://www.nps.gov/legacy/criteria.html>.

The NPS Northeast Region covers 13 New England and mid-Atlantic states from Maine to Virginia. It administers approximately 20 percent of the 391 units of the National Park System, and provides technical and financial assistance to 1,125 National Historic Landmarks, 17 National Heritage Areas, and 2 Affiliated Areas of the National Park System. It also manages other NPS partnership endeavors in the region such as the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. All studies conducted in the region to determine whether resources should be considered by Congress as potential units of the National Park System are completed by the Northeast Region's Division of Park Planning and Special Studies. The division has offices in Philadelphia and Boston.

NPS

Directions to the National Park Service Meeting on Thursday, Dec 6 6:30 pm at the Northampton Community Center

1. From I-64 in Hampton, take the Mercury Blvd (Rt 258) exit toward the James River (# 263 if heading toward Williamsburg, or # 263A if heading toward Norfolk)..
2. Proceed west on Mercury Blvd to the 3d traffic light from I-64 (Aberdeen Rd), getting into the right turn lane while passing Todds Center shopping mall on your right.
3. Turn right at Aberdeen, then go north one long block to the traffic signal at Todds Lane.
4. From Aberdeen turn left to Todds Lane and proceed just over a half mile to the second traffic light (Macon St, on the left) Just before reaching that light, Jefferson Davis Middle School will appear on the right. ,
5. Turn right at the Macon St. light into the school grounds, then drive on back behind the middle school to Northampton Community Center.