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CHAPTER I Purpose of and Need for Action



Chapter I – Purpose of and Need for Action

PROPOSED FEDERAL ACTION

On September 24, 2002, Congress enacted the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act*, (P.L. 107-226), which authorized “a national memorial to commemorate the passengers and crew of Flight 93 who, on September 11, 2001, gave their lives thereby thwarting a planned attack on our Nation’s Capital...”. The Act specifically designated the crash site of Flight 93, located in Stonycreek Township, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, as the site for this national memorial to honor the passengers and crew of Flight 93. The Act also formally designated this site a unit of the national park system, which automatically listed the site in the *National Register of Historic Places* (November 8, 2002).

The proposed Federal action is to establish a programmatic framework in the form of a General Management Plan to accomplish the objectives set forth in the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act*. This General Management Plan complies with all applicable statutory requirements and policies, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the National Historic Preservation Act, and 16 U.S.C. 1a-7(b) and addresses the following issues:

- The types of management actions required for the preservation of park resources;
- The types and general intensities of development (including visitor circulation and transportation patterns, systems, and modes) associated with public enjoyment and use of the area, including general locations, timing of implementation and anticipated costs;
- Visitor carrying capacities and implementation commitments for all areas of the park; and
- Potential modifications to the external boundaries of the park, if any, and the reasons for the proposed changes.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTION

In addition to the mandates set forth in the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act* and in 16 U.S.C. 1a-7(b), there are two broad purposes for the General Management Plan. The first is to ensure that the Partners—the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, the Families of Flight 93, the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force, and the National Park Service—as well as the public, have a clear understanding of the types of resource conditions, visitor experiences and management actions

that will best fulfill the mission of the Flight 93 National Memorial. The second is to ensure that the basic foundation for decision-making has been developed with the Partners and other interested stakeholders and adopted by the National Park Service after an adequate analysis of the alternatives, benefits, environmental impacts and economic costs and benefits of alternative courses of action has been conducted.

THE NEED FOR THE ACTION

The need for this action is to develop a programmatic framework to guide the National Park Service and the Partners during the creation and long-term administration of the new Flight 93 National Memorial. This framework, which is in the form of a General Management Plan, provides direction and guidance to the National Park Service for protecting the Memorial’s resource values and maintaining the tranquil setting of the crash site. The planning process offers the public an open opportunity to offer input and to formally participate in this process.

The Partners conducted an open international design competition to produce a design for the national memorial. The selected design was approved by the Partners and formally adopted by the Flight 93 Advisory Commission and publicly announced on September 7, 2005. It serves as the Preferred Design Alternative in this plan and is described in Chapter II, Alternative 2. This alternative also represents the agency’s preferred alternative.

The need for this action is further supported by the existing and projected visitation to the Memorial that is expected to increase from approximately 130,000 in 2004, to a peak of 400,000 in 2011—the 10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks—and to a level of about 230,000 visitors throughout the remainder of the 20-year planning horizon.

This action fulfills the authorities and responsibilities extended to the Secretary of the Interior and the National Park Service by Congress. Specifically, Congress has authorized the National Park Service, through the Secretary of the Interior, to—

1. assist the Flight 93 Advisory Commission in providing information on and interpretation of the site, conduct oral history interviews, provide advice on collections, storage and archives;

The General Management Plan will guide and direct development of the Flight 93 National Memorial for the next 15-20 years.



Entrance to Flight 93 Temporary Memorial (NPS 2003)

2. assist the Commission in conducting public meetings and forums;
3. provide project management assistance to the Commission for the planning, design and construction of the Memorial;
4. provide programming and design assistance to the Commission for possible memorial exhibits, collections, or activities;
5. provide staff support to the Commission and the Flight 93 Task Force;
6. participate in the formulation of plans for the design of the Memorial, to accept funds raised by the Commission for construction of the Memorial and to construct the Memorial;
7. acquire from willing sellers the land or interest in the land for the Memorial site by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange; and
8. administer the Flight 93 National Memorial as a unit of the national park system in accordance with applicable laws and policies.

KEY DECISIONS

As the planning process unfolded and meetings were held with the public and public agencies, it was apparent to the Partners that several key decisions were needed to guide development and administration of the national memorial. These decisions involved answering the following questions:

- *Why are the actions taken by the passengers and crew onboard Flight 93 important to the nation? What about this site is significant? What is important for visitors to learn from a visit to the national memorial?* To provide the initial answers to these questions, the Partners developed a Mission Statement. The Mission Statement serves as the foundation for the design competition and the General Management Plan and is presented later in this chapter.
- *What resources are fundamental for preserving, protecting, and understanding the story of Flight 93? How should other existing resources at the site be treated?* The National Park Service and the other Partners studied and evaluated the resources at the site. A list of Fundamental Resources appears later in this chapter. These resources are critical for understanding the Flight 93 story and can not be compromised. Other resources at the site are described in Chapter III.
- *What lands should be included within the national memorial boundary to ensure key resources are protected, necessary visitor facilities and access are provided, and an appropriate setting is provided?* The National Park Service, the Partners and a team of specialists toured the site, initiated various studies, discussed potential commercial and tourism-related development pressures, and conducted extensive computer viewshed modeling. These efforts lead to a boundary recommendation that was adopted by the Secretary of the Interior on January 14, 2005. An overview of the process (Figure I-1) and a boundary map (Figure I-2) appear later in this chapter.
- *How will the need for and the design of a “memorial feature” and all facilities at the national memorial be determined?* The Partners agreed that an open design competition would be the most democratic, inclusive and transparent way to collect ideas on the design for the Memorial and to develop a master plan for the site. The public would have an opportunity to enter the competition and share their opinions throughout the process before a selected design was announced. The selected design is presented as the Preferred Design Alternative in this General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement and is studied equally with a No Action Alternative. Descriptions of the No Action Alternative and the Preferred Design Alternative are presented in Chapter II.
- *What resource conditions, types of visitor experiences and levels and types of visitor use are desired and consistent with the Mission Statement?* The No Action Alternative and the Preferred Design Alternative are described in Chapter II. Each alternative description includes a management zoning map and a corresponding description of the desired resource conditions, intended visitor experience, and types and intensities of visitor uses.
- *How will development of the memorial be funded?* This plan includes a description of the costs associated with each alternative. An overall project budget was developed through extensive computer modeling, meetings with Federal and State officials, and a fundraising feasibility study. The overall project costs will be provided by the private sector, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Federal government. The relationship of this plan to the overall project budget and fundraising effort is explained later in this chapter.

THE FLIGHT 93 NATIONAL MEMORIAL ACT

In the days and weeks following the crash of Flight 93, exhaustive investigations into the crash occurred. During the autumn of 2001, the crater caused by the crash was backfilled and the area was planted with grass and wildflowers. A Temporary Memorial was created overlooking the crash site to accommodate the impromptu gathering of thousands of visitors wishing to memorialize and commemorate the actions of the passengers and crew of Flight 93.

At the same time, county and regional leaders, members of the local community, the families of the passengers and crew of Flight 93, and representatives from the National Park Service began to realize the importance of the crash site as a place of honor and for the need to protect it and to accommodate the overwhelming public visitation to the site. Within six months of the tragic event, Federal legislation was introduced to create a new national memorial honoring the passengers and crew of Flight 93.

On September 24, 2002, Congress enacted the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act* (Public Law 107-226, 116 Stat. 1345). The Act authorized “a national memorial to commemorate the passengers and crew of Flight 93 who, on September 11, 2001, courageously gave their lives thereby thwarting a planned attack on our Nation’s Capital...”. This legislation created the Flight 93 National Memorial and specifically designated the crash site of Flight 93, located in Stonycreek Township, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, as the site to honor the passengers and crew of Flight 93. The Secretary of the Interior is authorized by the Act to administer the Memorial as a unit of the national park system.

The purposes of the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act* are to—

- Establish a national memorial to honor the passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93 of September 11, 2001.
- Establish the Flight 93 Advisory Commission to assist with consideration and formulation of plans for a permanent memorial to the passengers and crew of Flight 93, including its nature, design, and construction.
- Authorize the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate and facilitate the activities of the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, provide technical and financial assistance to the Flight 93 Task Force, and to administer a Flight 93 memorial.

THE PARTNERS

Four Partner organizations are overseeing the planning, design and construction of a permanent memorial for Flight 93. These Partners are 1) the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, 2) the Families of Flight 93, 3) the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force, and 4) the National Park Service. Brief descriptions of the roles of these Partners are presented in the following discussion.

Flight 93 Advisory Commission

Pursuant to the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act* (P.L. 107-226), the *Flight 93 Advisory Commission* was established and directed to prepare “a report containing recommendations for the planning, design, construction and long-term management of a permanent memorial at the crash site.” Specifically, the Advisory Commission is required to—

1. submit by September 24, 2005, a report to the Secretary of the Interior and Congress containing recommendations on the planning, design, construction and long-term management of a permanent memorial at the crash site.
2. advise the Secretary on the boundaries of the memorial site.
3. advise the Secretary in the development of a management plan for the memorial site.
4. consult and coordinate closely with the Flight 93 Task Force, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and other interested parties, as appropriate, to support and not supplant the efforts of the Flight 93 Task Force on and before the date of the enactment of this Act to commemorate Flight 93.
5. provide significant opportunities for public participation in the planning and design of the Memorial.

On September 11, 2003, 15 members of the Flight 93 Advisory Commission (Commission) were sworn in by the Secretary of the Interior. The members of the Commission, selected by a Nominating Committee of the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force, are family members, local residents, and local and national leaders. The designee for the Director of the National Park Service also serves on the Commission. The Commission, which meets quarterly, held its first meeting on November 14, 2003.

Families of Flight 93, Inc.

The Families of Flight 93, Inc. (Families of Flight 93) is a certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization comprised of relatives of the passengers and crew of Flight 93. The purpose of the organization is to assist in developing and sustaining a



Flight 93 Memorial Task Force Workshop (NPS 2003)

The planning and design process grounds decisions in a Mission Statement that was created by the Partners and the public.

permanent memorial to the passengers and crew of Flight 93. The organization is led by a 15-member Board of Directors.

Flight 93 Memorial Task Force

The Flight 93 Memorial Task Force is a broad-based working group, composed of more than 80 family members, local residents, first responders, educators, local business leaders and government representatives. Task Force members came together in the months after September 11th as the families and the community sought ways to deal with the crash and commemorate the acts of the passengers and crew aboard Flight 93. The Task Force is structured into committees that serve as the operational arm of the Flight 93 Advisory Commission.

National Park Service

The National Park Service is the Federal agency responsible for overseeing and managing the planning, design and construction of the Flight 93 National Memorial. As the Memorial's long-term steward, the National Park Service is responsible for administering the Memorial as a unit within the national park system. In the fall of 2003, the National Park Service established the Flight 93 National Memorial project office at 109 West Main Street, Suite 104, Somerset, Pennsylvania 15501-2035. The office serves as the headquarters for the Memorial, as well as the combined offices for the Partners of Flight 93.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

In the authorizing legislation, Congress formally established the Flight 93 National Memorial, thereby creating one of the newest additions to the national park system. The National Park Service is the lead public agency responsible for the planning, design and construction of the national memorial. In the summer of 2003, the Partners agreed to a process (Figure I-1) for developing the mandates of the Act. This process ensures that the Partners are involved in the decision-making throughout the project and that all mandates for planning a new unit of the national park system are met.

The planning and design process grounds development and management decisions for the Memorial in the Mission Statement. This process also guided the design competition and this management plan to produce an open design competition, and consistent and well-informed decisions for the future of the Memorial. The process offers transparency and provides local residents, the public and

government agencies opportunities to actively participate in the establishment of the national memorial.

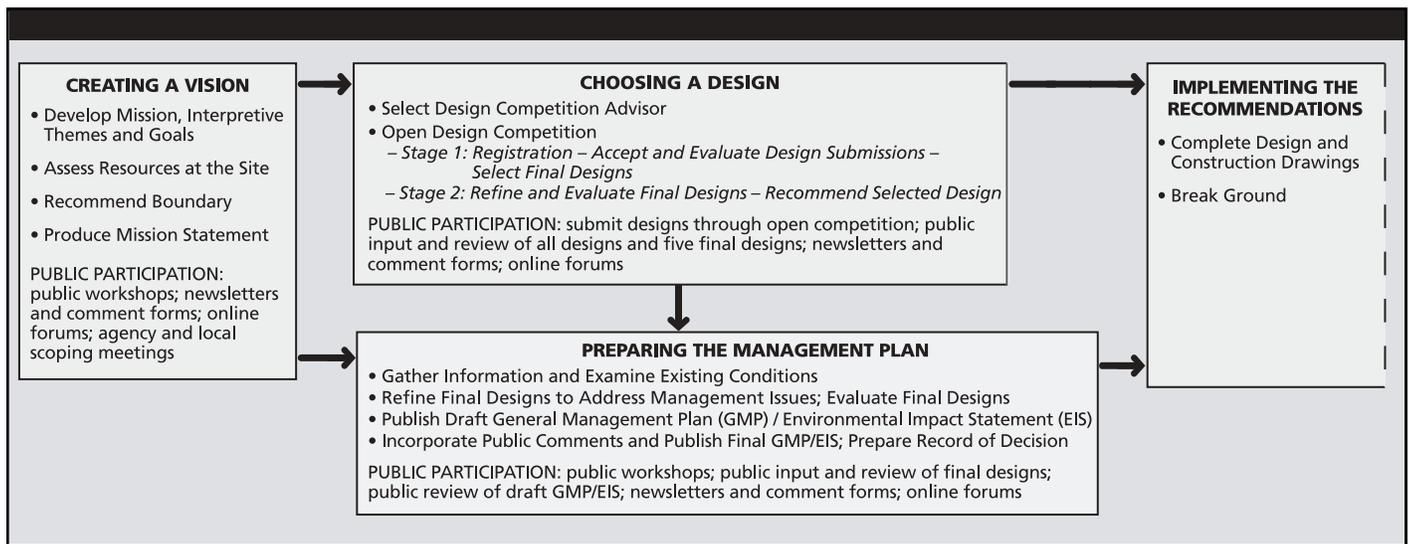
Development of a programmatic framework in the form of a General Management Plan is a major Federal action with long-term management implications for a unit of the national park system. Therefore, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and other pertinent Federal statutes and policies, is required¹. The NEPA process and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer is integrated into general management planning to support better decision-making. The integrated process provides a formal way to involve the public throughout the project, ensures consideration of all reasonable alternatives, and discloses benefits and potential consequences of implementing the plan. General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statements are the tools used by the National Park Service to guide the future of all units within the national park system.

The plan has been created through an interdisciplinary approach involving partners; other relevant offices within the National Park Service; other Federal, State and local agencies; multidisciplinary resource specialists; and design professionals. The General Management Plan is based on full and proper use of scientific information related to existing and potential resource conditions, visitor experiences, environmental impacts and relative costs of alternative courses of action. The plan is also prepared with information and ideas received from the general public.

General Management Plans are required for all units of the national park system. Each plan must meet all statutory requirements contained in 16 U.S.C. 1a-7(b) and must address the following components:

- The types of management actions required for the preservation of park resources;
- The types and general intensities of development (including visitor circulation and transportation patterns, systems and alternative modes) associated with public enjoyment and use of the area, including general locations, timing of implementation and anticipated costs;
- Visitor carrying capacities and implementation commitments for all areas of the park; and

¹A complete description of other applicable laws and policies can be found in Appendix A.



- Potential modifications to the external boundaries of the park, if any, and the reasons for the proposed changes.

To inform and support the recommendations developed in this plan, the National Park Service and the Partners conducted the following studies: visual analysis, transportation and traffic study, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, preliminary geotechnical study, visitation projections, water supply and sewerage feasibility study, collections and archives assessment, natural resource surveys, cultural landscape inventory, fundraising feasibility study, an economic impact analysis, oral histories, archeological survey and mining history.

General Management Plans include maps for each alternative that delineate management zones prescribing different treatments and functions for each area of the park. In this General Management Plan, both the No Action Alternative and the Preferred Design Alternative include a map of the management zones and a description of the desired resource conditions, desired visitor experiences and intended uses for each zone. Existing conditions and proposed development within these zones are evaluated in Chapter II-Alternatives.

As an integral part of the General Management Plan and NEPA process, the National Park Service is required to evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives through preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. As a companion to this General Management Plan, the Environmental Impact Statement assesses the potential effects of creating a designed memorial landscape on the natural environment and on the local communities. The purpose of and need for the Federal action is articulated; alternative concepts are evaluated; the affected natural,

cultural and socioeconomic resources are described; and the potential consequences of each alternative are evaluated. Agency and public input into the planning process is summarized and measures to avoid or minimize adverse effects are recommended.

Full public disclosure of the information collected, the evaluations and findings of these effects, and the input from all parties are presented in this document. The public will have a 45-day period to review and submit comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement, as well as present comments at an open public meeting and online. All comments will be considered in the final General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement. The process will conclude with the signing of a Record of Decision by the Regional Director, Northeast Region of the National Park Service.

ESTABLISHING A BOUNDARY

Determining the boundary for the Flight 93 National Memorial involved resource and viewshed studies, as well as public input. The Partners created a Resource Assessment Committee of the Task Force to offer recommendations to the Advisory Commission. This committee was comprised of community residents, local officials, National Park Service staff, and representatives from the Partners. The committee toured the site and initiated numerous studies by natural and cultural resource specialists, economists, planners and engineers to better understand the resources from the crash as well as the surrounding landscape. Extensive computer modeling was also done to define views that would be important to providing an appropriate setting for the national memorial. After considering all the information, the Partners

Figure I-1: Flight 93 National Memorial Planning and Design Process

Source: National Park Service, January 2006.

The approved boundary for the Flight 93 National Memorial provides for protection of the crash site and the setting for the memorial. It also allows for visitors to enter the site directly from U.S. Route 30 so visitor traffic on rural roads and surrounding villages is reduced.

concluded that the boundary should include the following lands and resources:

- 1) the crash site, the adjacent debris field, and the areas where human remains were found;
- 2) the immediate lands from which visitors could view the crash site, as well as areas necessary for visitor access and facilities; and
- 3) lands necessary to provide an appropriate setting for the Memorial.

The total area within the boundary is approximately 2,200 acres, of which approximately 1,355 acres include the crash site, the areas where human remains were found, the debris field, and lands necessary for viewing the national memorial. These lands would also allow for safe visitor access to and from the Memorial via U.S. Route 30 and would reduce memorial traffic on the local rural roadways. When acquired, these lands would be owned and managed by the Federal government. Approximately 907 additional acres comprise the perimeter viewshed. The viewshed would ideally remain in private ownership and be protected through the acquisition of conservation or scenic easements by partners or other governmental agencies.

As a result of collaborative efforts among all parties, the Flight 93 Advisory Commission signed Resolution 0401 recommending a boundary for the new national memorial on July 30, 2004. Figure I-2 displays the Flight 93 National Memorial boundary that was approved by the Secretary of the Interior on January 14, 2005.

All land within the national memorial boundary is in private ownership as of the public release of this draft plan. Any recommendations in this plan for development or resource protection actions by the National Park Service assume Federal ownership of any affected lands.

RELATIONSHIP OF THIS PLAN TO THE FLIGHT 93 NATIONAL MEMORIAL DESIGN COMPETITION

In the spring of 2004, the Partners hired professional design competition advisors to help develop and administer the international design competition. The Partners agreed that a design competition open to everyone would be the most inclusive and democratic way to create a national memorial. The Partners collectively sponsored the Flight 93 National Memorial International Design Competition with financial support from the Heinz Endowments and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

The design competition was conducted in two stages. Stage I, which began on September 11, 2004, was open to design professionals as well as to the public. All registered participants received a competition manual that presented the Memorial's Mission Statement and explained the initial design program. The competition manual provided a description of the site and its environs, a community profile and the history of the area. Site and resource maps were included.

The competition guidelines challenged the competitors to present design concepts for a "memorial expression" that portrays the issues, ideas, and spirit and intent of the Mission Statement. The "memorial expression" could range from an individual artwork piece to a larger landscape treatment. All competitors were requested to consider the following themes, which represented the Partners' objectives:

- Honor the heroes of Flight 93—the 40 passengers and crew who on one September morning changed the course of history...;
- Contribute to the dialogue of what a national memorial should be...;
- Conceive a message that will reflect on the event that occurred on September 11, 2001, and be timeless in its power and conviction....

The intent of Stage I was to provide a range of design concepts for the national memorial. In October, November, and December of 2004, registered competitors were given an opportunity to tour the site with the competition advisors and Partners. A photographic version of the site tour was posted on the project website and all registered competitors were given a compact disk with a video tour of the site and the local community. A formal question and answer period was also available with the questions and responses posted on the project website for all participants to view.

On January 11, 2005, the Stage I designs were submitted. All Stage I submittals were submitted anonymously as a concept on a single board. More than 1,000 entries were received from throughout the world. All entries that complied with the competition guidelines were exhibited in Somerset, Pennsylvania and were photographed and posted on the project website. Visitors to the exhibition and the website could comment on the designs. The exhibit provided family members, the Partners and the public with an opportunity to view the thoughtfulness, creativity, and commitment of the designers. All the design submittals were included in the national memorial's permanent collection.

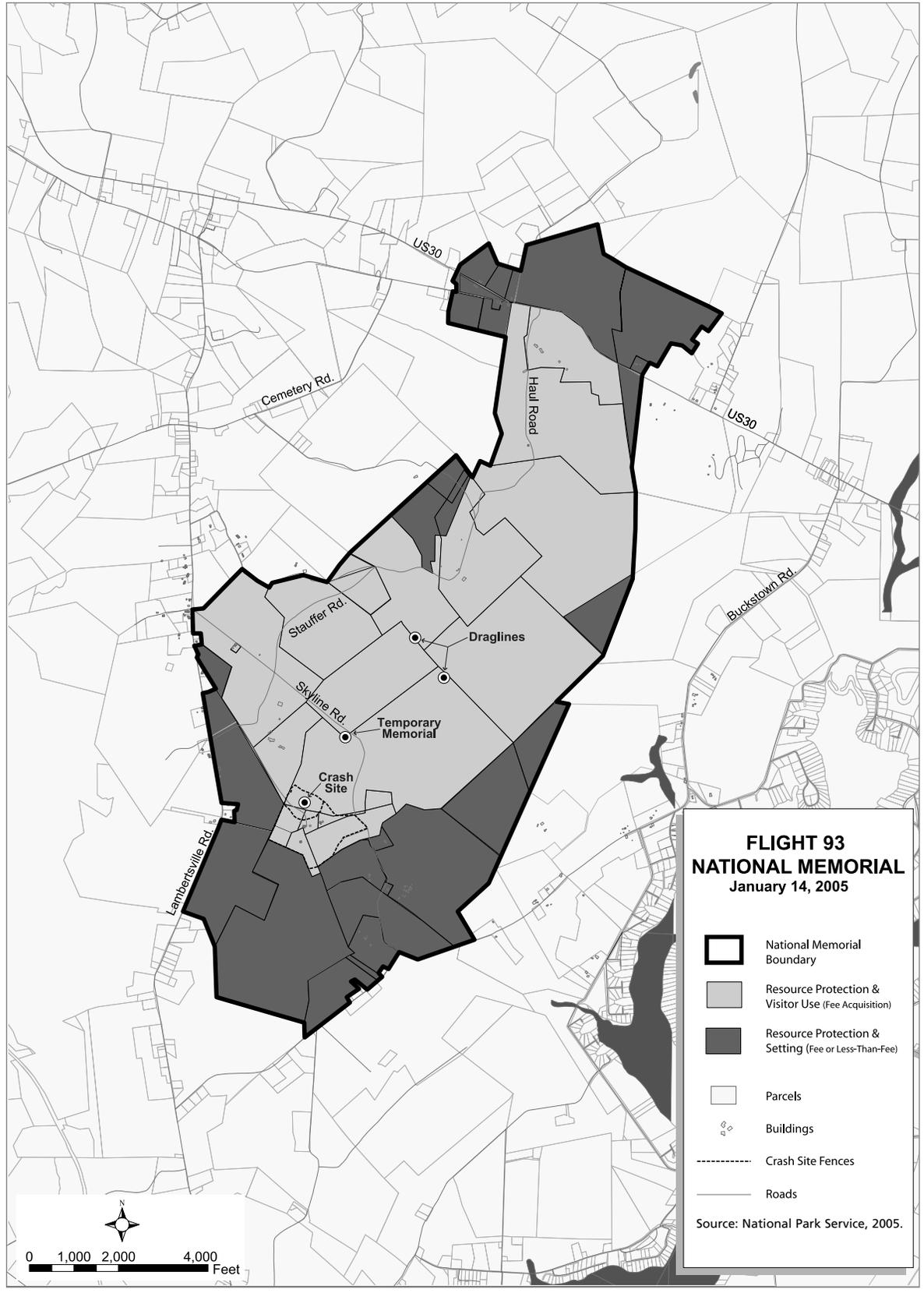
Figure I-2: Flight 93 National Memorial Boundary

Flight 93 National Memorial
Somerset, PA

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Boundary



The Partners agreed that an open international design competition would be the most inclusive, transparent, and democratic way to create a national memorial to the passengers and crew of Flight 93.

An independent jury, comprised of nine design professionals, family members, and national leaders (and one family member who served as a recorder and alternate), evaluated all Stage I entries. The jury reviewed the public comments, discussed the merits of the design concepts and sought entries that best embodied the spirit of the Mission Statement and an understanding of the landscape. The jury recommended five finalists, who were publicly announced on February 4, 2005, and who advanced to Stage II of the design competition.

In Stage II, the five finalists received an honorarium to refine their Stage I design concepts to a level that fully explained the spatial, material, and symbolic attributes of their concept for the Flight 93 National Memorial. On February 24 and 25, 2005, the five finalists toured the site and participated in a master plan workshop to explore the site's resource conditions, understand potential visitor experiences, and determine a range of actions that would be needed throughout the national memorial site to support their design. The workshop ensured that any of the design concepts could be fully considered as an alternative in the General Management Plan. In April 2005, the finalists met the Partners and participated in a second site visit in which they were given complete access to all areas of the site for several days. Stage II entries were due on June 15, 2005. The designs were exhibited in Somerset, Pennsylvania and on the project website from July 1 through September 25, 2005. The public was given the opportunity to comment on the final designs at the exhibition and through the project website.

During the first week of August 2005, a separate jury reviewed all public comments received to date and evaluated the designs. The Stage II Jury was comprised of 15 members including family members, design and art professionals, and community and national leaders. The jury collaboratively and rigorously examined the designs to determine which one best fulfilled the spirit of the Mission Statement.



Exhibition of Stage I Submittals, Flight 93 National Memorial Design Competition
(Chuck Wagner, 2005)

As prescribed by the competition regulations, the jury's recommendation was forwarded to the Design Oversight Committee, which is comprised of a representative from each of the Partners. The Design Oversight Committee reviewed the recommendation and presented it to the head officials of their respective Partner organizations. On September 7, 2005, all groups associated with this process concurred with the recommendation which was subsequently adopted by the Commission and publicly announced. The selected design, which is reflected in Alternative 2 of this study, represents the Preferred Design Alternative and the agency's Preferred Alternative.

RELATIONSHIP OF THIS PLAN TO OTHER PARTNER EFFORTS

Capital Campaign

The Families of Flight 93, on behalf of the Partners, contracted for a fundraising study to test the feasibility of various fundraising scenarios. The study concluded that it is feasible to raise \$30 million from the private sector toward creation of the Flight 93 National Memorial. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has pledged \$10 million towards the development of the Memorial. The remaining facility, infrastructure and land acquisition costs will be provided by the Federal government, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and other partners. The Partners subsequently prepared a fundraising plan and launched a capital campaign to raise the necessary funds.

The Families of Flight 93, the National Park Service and the National Park Foundation have created the Flight 93 National Memorial Fund and are entering into a fundraising agreement. The National Park Foundation is a congressionally chartered national nonprofit organization that will serve as the fiduciary agent for the Flight 93 National Memorial Fund.

Land Acquisition Program

As of the public release of this draft plan, all land within the national memorial boundary is in private ownership. Any recommendations in this plan for future development or resource protection conducted or authorized by the National Park Service assume Federal ownership of any affected lands. Through the Flight 93 National Memorial's enabling legislation, the National Park Service is authorized to acquire land for the Memorial from willing sellers or from persons wishing to donate or exchange land. The Conservation Fund, one of the nation's foremost conservation organizations, is

assisting the National Park Service in acquiring land for the Memorial. The National Park Service, the Partners, and The Conservation Fund are focusing their efforts on protecting lands at the crash site and other key areas for resource protection and visitor use (the “Resource Protection & Visitor Use” areas identified in Figure I-2).

All landowners within these areas have agreed to participate in the Federal land acquisition process and several have indicated a willingness to donate portions of their land. In April 2004, The Conservation Fund acquired remaining coal and mineral rights from PBS Coals, Inc. The Consolidation Coal Company has donated 135 acres just north of U.S. Route 30, adjacent to the boundary shown on Figure I-2.

Collections Management Plan

This General Management Plan is being prepared in conjunction with a Collections Management Plan. The Collections Management Plan will evaluate potential alternatives for long-term care, storage, use and display of the collections. All tributes left at the Temporary Memorial, as well as the general archive collection of the Flight 93 National Memorial, are cared for and catalogued by the National Park Service. The Somerset Historical Center originally performed these functions, but the collection and responsibility for care were transferred to the National Park Service in February 2005. All items are processed at the National Park Service project office in Somerset, Pennsylvania, and through a partnership with Somerset County, are shipped to a secure off-site facility for long-term storage.

Under any scenario, the Memorial collections would continue to be stored in an offsite facility, as it is unlikely that funding for an independent collections facility would become available during the life of this plan. The Preferred Alternative addresses the potential location of such a facility should funds become available.

Oral History Program

The Partners are sponsoring an international effort to collect the inclusive story of Flight 93 and its effect on people throughout the nation and around the world. This information will be collected through oral histories and will be available for researchers, interpretation and educational programs at the Memorial and for long-term preservation in the Flight 93 National Memorial archives. The program is managed by the National Park Service curator for the Flight

93 National Memorial with the assistance of volunteers and contract staff.

Archeological Assessment

The National Park Service has entered into an agreement with Indiana University of Pennsylvania to provide an overview of the mining history of the Memorial site and a brief overview of known or potential archeological and cultural resources within the park boundary. This study is scheduled to be completed in 2006.

FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING AND DECISIONMAKING

In accordance with National Park Service planning guidance, the Partners agreed that all development and management decisions should be predicated on the Memorial’s Mission Statement. Through a collaborative process involving several months of workshops, an online forum, and distribution of a project newsletter and public comment form, the Partners drafted a Mission Statement to guide and ground all aspects of the project. The preamble to the Mission Statement is:

*“A common field one day.
A field of honor forever.”*

May all who visit this place remember the collective acts of courage and sacrifice of the passengers and crew, revere this hallowed ground as the final resting place of those heroes, and reflect on the power of individuals who choose to make a difference.

Mission Statement

The *Mission* of the Flight 93 National Memorial is to—

1. honor the heroism, courage and enduring sacrifice of the passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93;
2. revere this hallowed ground as the final resting place of 40 heroes who sacrificed their lives so that other would be spared;
3. remember and commemorate the events of September 11, 2001;
4. celebrate the lives of the passengers and crew of Flight 93;
5. express the appreciation of a grateful nation forever changed by the events of September 11, 2001;
6. educate visitors about the context of the events of September 11, 2001; and
7. offer a place of comfort, hope and inspiration.



Bronze tablet inscribed with names of passengers and crew members of Flight 93, presented by the Commissioners of Somerset County (NPS 2003)

The Memorial will become a place for all generations to learn about the story of Flight 93 and the events that occurred on September 11, 2001, and to find meaning and inspiration in their experience.

Statement of Purpose

On September 24, 2002, the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act* (P.L. 107-226) was enacted by Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush, thus creating the Flight 93 National Memorial. The following statements represent shared understandings of the purpose of the Flight 93 National Memorial:

- Honor the passengers and crew members of Flight 93 who courageously gave their lives, thereby thwarting a planned attack on Washington, D.C.
- Allow the public to visit the site and express their feelings about the event and the passengers and crew of Flight 93
- Respect the rural landscape and preserve the solemn and tranquil setting of the crash site of Flight 93

Statement of Significance

The events of September 11, 2001, and the dramatic story of Flight 93 are forever linked to the Pennsylvania field on which the crash occurred. The following statements summarize the significance of this site and explain why it was selected as the site of a national memorial:

- The crash site is the final resting place of the passengers and crew of Flight 93.
- The heroic actions of the passengers and crew of Flight 93 are part of the transformational events of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States.

Preliminary Interpretive Themes

It is important that the Memorial become a place for all generations to learn about the story of Flight 93 and the events that occurred on September 11, 2001, and to find meaning and inspiration in their experience. The preliminary interpretive themes should facilitate media and programs that inspire personal reflection and national introspection, as well as educate the nation about the story of Flight 93 and the national tragedy that occurred on September 11, 2001. The preliminary themes outlined in this section serve only as a starting point for the Memorial interpretive programs, and will be more fully developed as we as a nation gain greater perspective into the tragedy. In the future, interpretive media and programs will be developed around the key stories and ideas that explain the significance of the Memorial and help to place the Memorial in its national and global contexts. The preliminary interpretive themes for the Memorial are as follows:

1. Flight 93 was the only hijacked plane on September 11 that failed to hit its intended target. The crash of Flight 93, only 20 minutes by air from Washington, DC, was the direct result of the actions of the passengers and crew who gave their lives to prevent a larger disaster at the center of American government.
2. The events of September 11, 2001, revealed the extraordinary bravery of ordinary men and women who, when challenged, responded with spontaneous leadership and collective acts of courage, sacrifice and heroism.
3. The first responders, the community and those individuals and organizations that provided assistance in the recovery and investigation demonstrated compassion and exemplary service.
4. Knowledge of the events surrounding September 11 contributes to a realization of the impact of intolerance, hatred and violence.
5. The public reaction to the events of September 11, including the actions of the passengers and crew of Flight 93, led to a strong sense of pride and patriotism and an affirmation of the value of human life.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES

To ensure the site is protected and the story of Flight 93 can be told to future generations, the National Park Service and the Partners identified those essential qualities and resources at the site that cannot be compromised. These resources (Table I-1) and values do not represent everything that is important or interesting about the site, but are critical for achieving the purpose and fulfilling the mission of the Memorial. These fundamental resources and values will help ensure that resource management is focused on the most significant values of the Memorial. Other resources are discussed in Chapter III-Affected Environment.

SPECIAL MANDATES

Through enactment of the *Flight 93 National Memorial Act*, Congress directly established a national memorial at the crash site of United Airlines Flight 93 in Stonycreek Township, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, to honor the passengers and crew² of Flight 93, and designated the Secretary of the Interior as administrator of the Memorial. This mandate superseded the National Park Service's standard procedures for evaluating the site's national significance and its suitability and feasibility before including the site into the national park system.

²For purposes of the Act, the terrorists onboard Flight 93 are not counted as passengers or crew of the flight.

Table I-1 Flight 93 National Memorial Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental Resource	Analysis and Guiding Principles
<p>Crash Site</p>	<p>Importance: This area encompasses the crash site of Flight 93. Debris from the plane and human remains were found in this area and in the adjacent hemlock grove. All of the passengers and crew were identified from DNA recovered from the crash site, but due to the force of the impact and explosion, most of the human remains could not be recovered. This site now serves as the final resting place for the 40 passengers and crew members of Flight 93. After August 1, 2005, the crash site and adjacent hemlock grove were officially released from the auspices of the County Coroner and returned to the respective landowners. Security continues to be provided through an agreement among Somerset County, the National Park Service and the landowners. On November 8, 2002, the crash site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.</p>
	<p>Current State and Related Trends: Two fences were erected around this area. An inner fence encompassing about 17 acres was first erected to protect the immediate crash site during the coroner’s investigation. The area of focus was approximately 100 feet x 75 feet deep where the plane crashed. The Coroner had the crater at the crash site filled and the area covered with topsoil and planted with a grass and wildflower mixture in Fall 2001. The second fence encompasses about 70 acres and extends into the hemlock grove and includes the debris field and areas where human remains were recovered. This area is also bounded by private property. No land use controls currently exist in Stonycreek Township to protect this property. The reverent atmosphere of the crash site could be compromised if incompatible development or land uses occurred adjacent to the area.</p>
	<p>Potential Future Threats: Somerset County Sheriff’s Deputies currently protect the area from unauthorized visitors. As this site is the final resting place of the passengers and crew, the public is not allowed access to this area. This area is very sensitive and will require continued security measures to limit unauthorized access.</p>
	<p>Stakeholder Interest: Only the families of the passengers and crew of Flight 93 and authorized National Park Service staff have access to the crash site. The Partners have agreed to maintain the privacy of this area and to restrict its usage to family members and authorized staff. No public access is expected to be allowed in this area during this planning period.</p>
	<p>Laws and Policy Guidance: After August 1, 2005, the crash site and adjacent hemlock grove were released from the auspices of the County Coroner and returned to the respective landowners. Security is provided through an agreement among Somerset County, the National Park Service, and the landowner.</p>
	<p>General Management Plan Issues: Security at the crash site and protection of privacy at the sacred ground are the most immediate issues. Providing an appropriate setting for viewing and visiting the crash site, given the absence of local land use controls, is an important issue in the plan. Future issues involve natural changes that could potentially occur at the crash site as well as requests for public access. Memorial plantings and placement of tributes are other General Management Plan-level issues.</p>
<p>Hemlock Grove</p>	<p>Importance: A grove of hemlocks is located to the south adjacent to the crash site. A portion of the grove was destroyed by the fire and impact of the crash. Trees in this area were removed and chipped, and the chips are found in a pile in this area. The recovery team found debris from the plane, human remains and personal articles in the hemlock grove. All of the passengers and crew were identified from DNA recovered from the crash site, but due to the impact and explosion, most of the human remains could not be recovered. After August 1, 2005, the crash site and adjacent hemlock grove were released from the auspices of the County Coroner and are currently protected through an agreement among Somerset County, the National Park Service, and the respective landowners. Several privately owned seasonal cabins and homes are located in the hemlock grove. Several structures sustained damage from the crash, including the ashlar stone home that sustained sufficient damage to render it uninhabitable.</p>
	<p>Current State and Related Trends: The National Park Service and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy resource professionals examined the hemlock grove and found the stand to be healthy and void of the hemlock woolly adelgid. The security fencing has limited browsing by white tail deer. However, some of the hemlocks have fallen due to natural causes, such as wind and weather, and due to their naturally shallow root system. The burning and removal of the damaged hemlocks resulted in exposing many interior trees directly to the wind and elements. The area is also currently bounded by private property. No land use controls currently exist in Stonycreek Township and a private hunting preserve recently opened adjacent to the hemlock grove. The reverent atmosphere of the crash site and potential safety of visitors could be compromised by incompatible development or uses adjacent to the area.</p>
	<p>Potential Future Threats: Eastern hemlocks are especially sensitive to one or more pests or diseases that can affect tree health or aesthetics. The most serious threat is from the hemlock woolly adelgid, which has devastated hemlocks along the eastern United States. Other pests known to strike hemlocks include scales, weevils, bagworm, mites and sapsucker woodpeckers. Hemlocks are prone to needle rust, cankers, and non-parasitic bark splitting on heavy and poorly drained soil. High winds and heavy snowfalls contribute to the weakening of trees and increased falls, especially along the newly established edges of the stand.</p>
	<p>Stakeholder Interest: The hemlock grove is critically important to the families of the passengers and crew as it is part of the final resting place of their loved ones and offers a place of beauty and solace.</p>

Table I-1 Flight 93 National Memorial Fundamental Resources and Values *(continued)*

Fundamental Resource	Analysis and Guiding Principles
Hemlock Grove <i>(continued)</i>	<p>Law and Policy Guidance: After August 1, 2005, the crash site and adjacent hemlock grove were released from the auspices of the County Coroner. The protective fencing remains and security is provided through an agreement with the local landowners. The hemlock is the State tree of Pennsylvania, but it is not a protected species.</p>
	<p>General Management Plan Issues: Security at the hemlock grove and protection of privacy at the sacred ground are immediate issues. Potential pests and disease of the hemlock grove is a pressing issue. Another General Management Plan issue is providing an appropriate setting for viewing and visiting the crash site, given the absence of local land use controls.</p>
	<p>Assessment of Information: The hemlock grove should be given the highest level of protection not for its natural resource value, but for its importance in containing the remains of the passengers and crew of Flight 93. A management plan should be prepared to specifically address protection of the hemlock grove against future pests and disease.</p>
Viewshed	<p>Importance: The open, rural character of the landscape of the site provides a powerful setting for experiencing the national memorial. This landscape is also important to the story of Flight 93 and the crash of the plane into a rural area.</p>
	<p>Current State and Related Trends: Views from within the national memorial still retain a rural character of open fields and wooded hillsides. Remnants of the site’s mining history remain and an industrial recycling and smelting operation exists. Some farmlands in the area are temporarily protected from development through voluntary conservation programs. Limited land use controls exist in the area.</p>
	<p>Potential Future Threats: The lands comprising the viewshed of the national memorial are held in private ownership and have no land use controls. As such, landowners are permitted to develop these lands as they wish. Stonycreek and Shade Townships have agreed to join with Somerset County and other local jurisdictions to participate in a land use planning study for the corridors leading to the national memorial. Stonycreek Township may also study the areas surrounding the national memorial. The surrounding hillsides are particularly vulnerable to the installation of communications towers and wind turbines, and lands adjacent to U.S. Route 30 are susceptible to commercial and tourism-related development.</p>
	<p>Stakeholder Interest: Many landowners in the surrounding areas have expressed interest in protecting the rural lifestyle and the character of these lands, but others are undoubtedly interested in developing their land in ways that could affect the character of the area. The Pennsylvania Game Commission has shown an interest in protecting some of these lands as State gamelands. Regional watershed and conservation organizations have expressed an interest in retaining the rural nature of these lands.</p>
	<p>Law and Policy Guidance: Neither Shade nor Stonycreek Township has zoning or other land use controls to regulate the type and intensity of development that could potentially occur in these areas.</p>
	<p>General Management Plan Issues: Key perimeter viewshed areas were included in the boundary. Development of other lands beyond the boundary could affect the character of the area and the quality of visitor experience.</p>
	<p>Assessment of Information: A visual analysis was conducted from several key visitor locations. Through this analysis, the boundary recommendation included those areas and ridgetops that define views from the site and shape the setting of the national memorial. National Park Service and land trusts have authority to acquire conservation or scenic easements (or other less-than-fee interests) in lands within the boundary from willing sellers or through donations and land exchanges. The National Park Service and the Partners should actively seek others to help protect these lands and should continue to encourage local land use planning initiatives to protect the rural character in the areas surrounding the national memorial and the quality of the visitor experience.</p>



Crash site (OCLP 2003)

SCOPING

Identification of Major Issues

Early in the planning process, the National Park Service and the Partners took several actions to determine the scope of the issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement. A Notice of Intent to Prepare a General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement was published in the Federal Register (68 FR 68947-68948) on December 10, 2003³. The notice announced the National Park Service's intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in conjunction with the preparation of a General Management Plan for the Flight 93 National Memorial. Table I-2 lists the formal meetings that were conducted throughout the planning scoping process for Flight 93 National Memorial. Many briefings for local elected officials, community groups, and local residents were also held.

During the scoping process, several issues were identified by the public as well as other agencies. The following issues identified were:

- Local community and lifestyle impacts, including traffic on local roadways and access to the site, changes to the local tax base and school district tax revenue, and use restrictions, such as hunting and ATV use on the site
- **Adjacent development** and its impact on the visitor experience and the rural setting for the national memorial
- **Development challenges** such as the presence of hazardous materials, geotechnical constraints, and the ability to provide adequate potable drinking water and sewerage systems
- **Accommodating visitation levels**, particularly during commemorations, without affecting the solemn environment and visitor experience
- **Noise impacts** on the visitor experience from aircraft and other noise generators
- **Private Sorber family cemetery** located within the boundary and its future protection
- **Security and public safety**



Visioning workshop (Pennsylvania Environmental Council 2004)

³Pursuant to §1508.22 of the CEQ regulations.

Table I-2: Scoping Meetings Conducted for Flight 93 National Memorial, 2003-2005	
Meeting	Date
Flight 93 Task Force	May 11, 2003
Flight 93 Task Force	August 16, 2003
Public Open House	October 10, 2003
Flight 93 Advisory Commission/Task Force	November 14, 2003
Agency Scoping Meeting	December 15, 2003
Flight 93 Advisory Commission/Task Force	February 21, 2004
Stakeholder/Community Meeting	April 15, 2004
Flight 93 Advisory Commission/Task Force	May 14, 2004
Community Visioning Meetings for Memorial*	June 11-12, 2004
Flight 93 Advisory Commission/Task Force	July 30, 2004
Flight 93 Advisory Commission/Task Force	October 22, 2004
Stakeholder/Community Meeting	December 6, 2004
Agency Scoping Meeting	December 9, 2004
Flight 93 Advisory Commission/Task Force	January 15, 2005
Exhibition and Public Comment on the Stage I Designs	January 14-February 21, 2005
Flight 93 Advisory Commission/Task Force	April 16, 2005
Public Open House	May 12, 2005
Exhibition and Public Comment on Final Designs (Alternatives)	July 1-September 25, 2005

*Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Somerset County Planning Commission and National Park Service sponsored.
Source: NPS, March 2005.

This document will evaluate the impacts of implementing the proposal on the cultural, natural, and socioeconomic environs.

The following issues were dismissed from further consideration. Although they may represent issues of concern by the National Park Service and the Partners, they do not directly relate to the proposed action in this plan.

- **Treatment of Acid Mine Drainage.** Several passive and active treatment operations exist within the national memorial boundary. Even though some of these lands will be acquired by the National Park Service, responsibility for treatment of mine drainage from previous operations rests with the coal companies as monitored by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Environmental Protection.
- **Regional Watershed Planning.** While the National Park Service and the Partners support efforts to improve regional water quality, it is beyond the scope of this plan to propose actions to address these issues beyond the boundary of the national memorial or the authority or responsibility of the National Park Service. However, the National Park Service supports and would participate in regional watershed planning.
- **Environmental Remediation of Contaminated Sites.** This plan does not propose specific remediation actions for any contaminated sites on properties within the national memorial. As part of the Federal land acquisition process, any environmental remediation must occur prior to Federal ownership of the property. Environmental site assessments have been conducted and close coordination with the National Park Service realty staff has occurred to ensure there were no contaminants issues significant enough to preclude Federal ownership of a property within the boundary.

IMPACT TOPICS

Impacts on resources protected by Federal and State laws, such as cultural and natural resources, as well as direct and indirect effects to the socioeconomic conditions in the surrounding communities, will be evaluated. Other factors that may affect the park's resources will also be assessed. Cumulative effects, involving past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions beyond the scope of this action, will also be identified. Measures to mitigate and minimize any adverse effects will be recommended. Impacts that will be evaluated by alternative are—

- Natural Resources
- Historic and Cultural Resources

- Socioeconomic Impacts
- Land Uses
- Transportation
- Energy Requirements and Conservation Potential
- Visual and Aesthetic Resources
- Public Health and Safety

RELATIONSHIP TO PLANS, PROJECTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Preparation of this plan was closely coordinated with many other efforts in the region. The National Park Service and the Partners have been working closely with many agencies and local officials and citizens to stay informed of these projects. A listing of these efforts is provided in **Appendix C**. The projects that most directly affect the creation of the national memorial are listed below.

Somerset County Comprehensive Plan Update

In July 2003, the Somerset County Planning Commission published a draft county comprehensive plan update. This plan summarizes 10 key initiatives proposed to spur new economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life. Initiative #7 sets forth a goal “to ensure that new development conserves and maintains the positive character qualities of the county and its landscape and to provide for growth which is consistent with infrastructure investments.” The final County comprehensive plan is expected to be published in 2006.

Flight 93 National Memorial Area Corridor Planning Study

The Somerset County Commissioners, in conjunction with several local jurisdictions, are preparing a planning study of the corridors leading to the Flight 93 National Memorial. In January 2005, the following jurisdictions passed a resolution agreeing to participate in the corridor planning study: Somerset Borough and Jenner, Shade, Somerset and Stonycreek Townships. The study is being funded through grants from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and supported by the National Park Service and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council. The study will begin in the Spring of 2006 and is expected to be completed within one year. The study will evaluate portions of Routes 281, 219, 601 and U.S. Route 30 as these routes relate to the national memorial, and will assess the potential for residential, commercial and other development

along these corridors. The corridor planning study will—⁴

- Identify options to preserve the existing rural features along the future corridor, while encouraging economic development;
- Understand the needs and desires of local landowners and business owners;
- Determine the potential for new growth, including what it may be and where it could be located;
- Give options to local officials as to managing new growth and development within the corridor area, including what the new development would include;
- Consider ways in which municipalities and the county can work with each other to address common planning and development options; and
- Identify existing historic and natural assets, including corridor landscapes for protection

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS

As the Federal agency responsible for administering a national memorial, National Park Service must comply with certain laws, regulations and policies. The Memorial's enabling legislation, P.L. 107-226, *Flight 93 National Memorial Act*, and a matrix listing applicable Federal and State laws and other mandates and policies are listed in Appendix A.

⁴Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Somerset Co. Planning Commission information from Flight 93 National Memorial Public Open House, May 12, 2005.



View of crash site (NPS 2003)