

INTERPRETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTLINE

for

Sonoma State Historic Park

(Revised June 2011)

INTERPRETATION MASTER PLAN (Part I)

Table of Contents

The table of contents should include at least the main sections identified below. Including the headings within each section is optional, but is recommended for maximizing the ease with which readers can find what they are looking for.

Executive Summary

The executive summary should be written after the rest of the plan is completed. It should be no more than two pages and should contain enough detail that if it were the only portion of plan read, it would give the reader a good general idea of what the plan contains.

Section 1: Introduction

A. Park Overview

- Briefly describe the park for those who are not familiar with it.

B. Park History and Significance

- Provide a brief history of the park. When and how was it acquired and classified? Have there been any additions or other notable changes since the park was first acquired?
- Quote the most recent Park and Recreation Commission-approved Statement of Purpose (sometimes named the Declaration of Purpose) for the park. These can be found in the approved general plan or on the planning division webpages at www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/purpose_statements.pdf

C. Plan Purpose

- What is the purpose of this plan—what will it achieve? Include the purpose of an interpretation master plan in general—it is a long-range interpretive plan that builds on the general plan and provides a unified interpretive vision for the park. Also include any specific purposes for this particular plan. Finally, list the intended lifespan of the plan (i.e., how long it will be used or when it should be updated).

- Why is it being written now (what is driving this planning effort)? For example, is there a new approved general plan to build on? Have there been significant changes in park use patterns or resources? Does the park or region that the plan is being written for need a more coordinated interpretive approach?

D. Planning Team

- Who was on the planning team, and what were their roles?
- When did planning start and finish?
- Briefly describe the process used.

Section 2: Park Interpretive Resources

What are the significant resources to interpret at the park? What resources define the park and the potential visitor experience? These should be restated and updated from the General Plan, additions or changes from the GP should be cited. Be sure to consult with appropriate subject matter specialists in order to incorporate the most recent understanding of the resources at hand.

[Note: At the beginning of this section, you may want to provide a brief summary and then include the additional detail throughout the section.]

A. Natural Resources and History

- What are the park's representative plants, animals, and geological features?
- How have these resources changed throughout time?
- Are there any natural resources within your park that require special protection and would benefit from better public awareness?
- Are there any designations of local and/or national significance that visitors would find interesting? (i.e. a national natural landmark). If so, briefly discuss why these resources were designated.
- Why are these resources significant to the park and the visitor?

B. Cultural Resources and History

- What human stories are significant to and/or unique to your park?
- Are these resources designated at a state or local level for their significance? (i.e. the National Register of Historic places). If so, briefly discuss how and why they were designated.
- What resources you have in the park that represents these significant stories?
- Why should these resources and stories matter to the visitor?

C. Recreational Assets / Potential

- Why do the people come and recreate at your park? What activities do they engage in most often?
- What do they do when they get there?
- Do any of these recreational opportunities provide opportunities for interpretation and education?

Section 3: Interpretive Direction

A. Interpretive Mission and Vision

- What is the mission of California State Parks?
- What are California State Parks' missions for interpretation and education?
- What is the park unit's overall mission? (Restate from the General Plan, or leave blank if not identified in GP)
- What is the park unit's mission for interpretation? (Restate from the General Plan, or create new if not in the GP)
- What is the park unit's vision for interpretation? (Restate from the General Plan, or create new if not in the GP)

B. Interpretive Goals and Guidelines

- What are the interpretive goals for the park unit? (Restate from the General Plan, or create new if no interpretive goals in the GP)
- If applicable, what are the interpretive guidelines for the park unit (Restate from the General Plan)

C. Interpretive Themes and Other Directives

- What are the interpretive themes for the park unit?
What is the park unit's unifying theme? (Restate from GP or revise to current standards)
What is the park unit's primary theme(s)? (Restate from GP or revise to current standards)
What is the park unit's secondary theme(s)? (Restate from GP or revise to current standards)
- If applicable, what is the park unit's interpretive period(s)? (Restate from GP or revise to current standards)
- Provide a summary of the park unit's Scope of Collections (then include the full Scope of Collections in the appendix)
- What educational content standards can be met through interpretation provided at the park?

Section 4: Current Status of Interpretation

[Note: This section should briefly describe the current status of these issues; discussion of opportunities for the future should be addressed in the Recommendations section below.]

A. Existing Interpretation Planning Documents

- List existing planning documents that drive or guide interpretation, such as park general plans, interpretive prospectuses, interpretive project or program plans, and furnishing plans

B. Interpretive Facilities

- List and briefly describe any existing interpretive facilities, such as visitor center, campfire center, interpretive trails, house museum, native plant demonstration garden, etc.
- If any of the facilities have other non-interpretive uses, also note those—for example, building or grounds rental for special events such as weddings or meetings.

C. Interpretive Programs (Presented Interpretation)

- List and briefly describe existing presented interpretive programs, including school programs (onsite, offsite, PORTS, ELP and ESP), public tours, demonstrations, campfire programs, Junior Rangers, living history, talks, roving interpretation, and other in-person interpretation.

D. Interpretive Media

- List and briefly describe indoor and outdoor panels and exhibits (including house museum furnishing), audio-visual presentations, publications, and websites.

E. Interpretive Special Events

- List and briefly describe regularly-occurring interpretive special events. Who organizes the event (park staff and volunteers, concession, cooperating association?)

F. Staffing

- How many park employees are involved in interpretation? What are their classifications and time bases?
- How many docents and other volunteers assist with interpretation? What tasks do they perform? Who manages them? How are they trained?
- Are there any interpretive concessions? What services do they provide?

G. Interpretive Collections

- What objects are used for interpretation? These may be historic objects displayed from park collections, hands-on replicas, etc.

H. Park References and Resources

- What park-specific materials (e.g. park archives, resource inventories, academic research, references) are available for cultural and natural history background research when planning park interpretive programs and facilities?
- Are there repositories that hold further information or collections associated with the park?

I. Revenue

- What fees or donations are generated by interpretation?

J. Other Area Interpretive Providers

- What other parks, museums, discovery centers, etc. provide interpretation in the area? What are their main topics and methods?
- Do any of these facilities impact or have the potential to impact interpretation within the park?
- How does an experience at your park differ from or complement the surrounding facilities?
- Is there potential for partnerships with these entities?

K. Public Awareness and Community Involvement

- How do people within the local community know about your park?
- Is the community supportive of your park?
- Are there community events or other programs that take place in your park?
- How is the community currently involved in your interpretive and educational programming and facility development?

L. Partners/Supporters

- Does the park have any partnerships with other area interpretive providers, schools, or community groups?
- Does your park have a cooperating association? If so, how and why do they support your park (especially interpretation and education)?
- What other partners or stakeholders do you currently work with (such as conservation organizations, cultural groups, or others with an interest in the park and any issues related to history, sensitivity, use of collections, objects, sites)? How do these partners and stakeholders support park operations and interpretation and education?
- Are there other organized groups that provide significant funds, time, publicity, lobbying, or other forms of support?

M. Education

- Who is the educational community that utilizes your park? (How many school groups come? Where do they come from? What are their age groups and educational focus?)
- How does the educational community benefit or contribute to the park interpretive and educational program?
- Are there universities doing research within your park? If so, can this research be interpreted to the public?
- Are there nearby schools that are potential partners, but not currently active at the park?

Section 5: Issues and Opportunities

A. Audience Analysis

- Who comes to your park?
- Where do they come from?
- Why do they come to your park?
- How do people first learn about the park before they arrive? For example: Television, radio, newspaper coverage, website, word-of-mouth, road signs, etc.

B. Visitor Needs and Expectations

- What do visitors need and want from their experience in the park? Does the interpretation offered help meet visitors' needs and expectations? What could be done differently to help visitors experience a deeper understanding of the park and its resources?
- Do visitors know what opportunities for interpretation and recreation are available in the park and how they can take advantage of them? If not, how could they be better informed of these opportunities?

C. Circulation

- How do visitors know about interpretive and educational opportunities within the park?
- Can these opportunities be better communicated?

D. Partners/Supporters

- What types of interpretive services (events, programs, facilities, media) are of interest to potential and current partners and supporters?
- How could priorities for interpretive services at the park be better communicated to partners and supporters?

E. Interpretive Considerations

- a. Natural Environments
 - Are there any preserves, protected areas, special status species, or other resources that deserve special consideration? If so, list them and give their locations.
- b. Cultural Resources
 - Are there any historic structures, cultural landscapes, or resources of special concern in relation to preservation and meeting the terms of PRC 5024? If so, list them and give their locations.
- c. Barriers
 - Are there any barriers to access to public locations and programs in the park for visitors of varying abilities? If so, identify them. What steps could be taken to make them more accessible?
- d. Public Safety
 - Are there potential hazards to the public that should be considered when developing interpretive services? If so, identify them.
 - Are there locations in the park that pose public safety risks (or may appear to do so for visitors? If so, where/what are they and what could be done to lessen those risks or better inform visitors about them?
- e. Park Security
 - Are there any security concerns related to the safekeeping of the interpretive resources and facilities in the park? If so, identify them.
- f. Environmental Issues
 - Are there any environmental issues, such as weather and seasonal changes, that may impact either visitors taking advantage of interpretive offerings or the actual interpretive resources, collections, or facilities? If so, identify them.
- g. Maintenance
 - Will the interpretive resources, collections and facilities be subjected to an inordinate amount of use or wear and tear above the norm?
- h. Use of Facilities and Equipment
 - Can or will the interpretive resources, collections or facilities be used for other purposes beyond that of interpretation in the park? If so, what are those other uses and how could they impact the resources, collections, or facilities?

Section 6: Recommendations

[Note: This section may be created in a narrative form or as a matrix, depending on the nature of the park unit its needs]

A. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Restate the interpretive goals for the park unit from the Interpretive Direction section, and for each goal answer the following questions:

- What are the objectives that will assist in meeting this goal?
- What are the strategies (media, facilities, programs, and other actions such as collections development and staffing changes) that will assist in meeting this objective? (Note: Some strategies may help meet multiple objectives.) In order to avoid the need for environmental review at this stage of planning and to allow for the Interpretation Master Plan to have a longer lifespan, strategies should be identified in general, not location-specific, terms. The Interpretation Action Plan can then begin to get more specific in terms of identifying strategies and what will be needed to carry them out.

B. Phasing/Priorities

- In a general sense, what is the suggested order/phasing for carrying out the objectives and strategies identified in this section (e.g., which objectives should be carried out in the next 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-9 years)?

Section 7: References

What references (both internal and external) were consulted in the development of the plan? Organize the references in a way that will maximize their usefulness to those reading and using the plan in the future. Brief annotations (even if only for those resources you found most useful) are recommended but not required.

Section 8: Appendix

- A. Scope of Collections for the park
- B. Recommended strategies restated from the Recommendations section, but sorted and categorized as media, facilities, and programs.
- C. Surveys [taken in process of plan development]
- D. Letters and Comments [comments received during the process of planning]

INTERPRETATION ACTION PLAN (Part II)

Table of Contents

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Executive Summary

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Section 1: Introduction

A. Plan Purpose

- What is the purpose of this plan—what will it achieve? Include the purpose of an interpretation action plan in general—it is a short-range interpretive plan that builds on the interpretation master plan and provides a coordinated direction for interpretation at the park. Also include any specific purposes for this particular plan. Finally, list the intended lifespan of the plan (i.e., how long it will be used or when it should be updated).
- Why is it being written now (what is driving this planning effort)? For example, is there a new approved general plan to build on? Have there been significant changes in park use patterns or resources? Does the park or region that the plan is being written for need a more coordinated interpretive approach?

B. Planning Team

- Who was on the planning team, and what were their roles?
- When did planning start and finish?
- Briefly describe the process used.

Section 2: Projects and Priorities

[interpretive development organized by categories (from the Master Plan) into a chart identifying responsibilities, priorities, and ongoing or one-time costs]

- A. Interpretive Facilities [renovating old, developing new]
- B. Interpretive Programs [authenticity, tours, demonstrations, living history, other activities, guidelines, theme-related programs, events calendar]
- C. Interpretive Media [publications, audio-visual programs]
- D. Interpretive Collections [policies guiding acquisition and disposition, collections use]

- E. Educational Services [teacher training, guides, Environmental Living Programs—ELP, Environmental Studies Programs—ESP, school tours, Parks Online Resources for Students and Teachers—PORTS]
- F. Interpretive Concessions [recommendations as appropriate to the park resources]
- G. Interpretive Readiness [staff, docent and concession training focus, schedule, evaluation]
- H. Park Teams and Committees [district interpretive improvement team, concession review team]
- I. Communication and Cooperation [internal communication, public awareness, outreach, website, orientation signage, collaboration]
- J. Partnerships and Support [direction in support of interpretation for cooperating association, foundation, other organizations]
- K. Research, Reports, Guidelines [recommendations for research and references—graphics files, cultural landscape plans, historic structures reports, interpretive plans, property histories, events and activities]

Section 3: Responsibilities for Implementation

- Who will be responsible for reviewing and updating the plan on a regular basis? Who should serve on that team?
- Who will be responsible for developing the Annual Interpretation Implementation Plan and at what time of year will that occur? Who should serve on that team?
- Who will be responsible for ensuring projects identified in the Action Plan are entered into the Project Infrastructure Database (PID)?

Section 4: Appendix