



Morris J. Berman Grounding and Oil Spill San Juan, Puerto Rico

Proposed Projects to Restore National Historic Site Resources



El Morro at the Western
Tip of Old San Juan

Lost and Diminished Use of National Historic Site

There was a reduction in historic appreciation services for approximately six weeks after the oil spill. During that time, visitation at El Morro and San Cristobal by more than 123,000 people was impacted by impaired natural resources and spill-response actions. In addition, some individuals may have canceled their visits to the park altogether because of the spill. The projects described below are proposed as compensation for the reduction in historic appreciation during that period of time.

Projects to Compensate for Lost and Diminished Use of National Historic Site

Of the \$9,688,563 settlement received, \$1,493,604 is available for projects to address lost and diminished use of the National Historic Site. The Trustees identified three compensatory restoration projects:

Improve and Extend Coastal Promenade

To improve and extend the Coastal Promenade, the National Historic Site would (1) apply a non-slip treatment to the entire existing walkway and install trench drains across the walkway in low areas where water collects to alleviate periodic unsafe, slippery conditions; (2) extend the Promenade at the Water Battery in a circular manner; center the overlook on the existing stone seat wall; install concrete bollards, low-level walkway lights, rip-rap, a drinking fountain, and interpretive signage; and (3) extend the Promenade from the Water Battery approximately 300 feet east along the base of the fort to connect with an existing stairway to access the upper levels of El Morro. Other features of the Promenade project include lighting for night use, reinforcement of the El Morro wall, protective rip-rap, and landscape improvements.

**Proposed Phase I
Promenade, Water Battery,
and Wall Area
Improvements**



Restoration of El Morro Water Battery

This project would stabilize and preserve the historic interior and exterior surfaces of the Water Battery area and the adjacent exterior walls that face the shoreline. The project would correct existing unsafe conditions resulting from hundreds of years of deterioration of the structures due to the tropical climate and wind and wave erosion. To perform the restoration, preservation teams on scaffolds will use low-pressure washing systems to clean the walls of vegetation and soil. Patches of inappropriate materials will be removed, cracks filled, and adequate cementitious material will be replaced in-kind. Existing stairways will be repaired to allow access to portions of the battery now inaccessible to visitors.

Clean and Stabilize Exterior Walls of Historic Site

This project includes the cleaning, stabilization, and restoration of approximately 25,000 square feet of the exterior wall of El Morro adjacent to the Water Battery. Cleaning will be done using a mild, water-soluble solution applied with a low-pressure sprayer to remove environmental staining, vegetation and biological growth such as fungi and non-native seagrapes. Inappropriate patching material will be removed; cracks repaired, and deteriorated brickwork replaced. Deteriorated historic brickwork and masonry mortar will be replaced in-kind using a historical lime-based mortar.

Public Comments on Proposed Projects

The Trustees encourage comments from the public on these projects, as well as on any other projects that the public may identify to address lost historic site use.

For Additional Information

Those who want more information about potential projects should refer to the Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment prepared by the Trustees, which can be downloaded from the following website: <http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/berman/>. Hard copies are available by calling 787-729-6777 or writing San Juan National Historic Site, 501 Norzagaray Street, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901