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LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN

SELMA TO MONTGOMERY NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL



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LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN

SELMA TO MONTGOMERY NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL

JANUARY 2003

prepared by

Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Selma to Montgomery NHT

Harpers Ferry Center
Interpretive Planning

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INTRODUCTION

On July 3, 1990 Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior (Public Law 101-321) to study the route traveled by voting rights protestors in 1965 from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, and to assess the eligibility, feasibility, and desirability of authorizing the route as a national historic or scenic trail. The Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service (NPS) completed this assessment in 1993 and recommended that the 54 mile march route be established as a national historic trail as a component of the national trail system, administered by the NPS. Congress responded by establishing the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail (SEMO) on November 12, 1996 through an amendment to the National Trails System (Public Law 104-333). The Southeast Regional Office completed a booklet of Alternatives, titled "Alternatives Summary, Comprehensive Management Plan" in Fall, 1999. However, the booklet is not the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP); SEMO and the Southeast Regional Office are currently in the process of developing the CMP. The booklet summarizes three alternatives which present ideas for management, use and development of the trail. Of these three, Alternative C was chosen as the preferred alternative for implementation.

Prior to National Historic Trail status, the Governor of Alabama designated the 54-mile march route along US 80 as a National Scenic Byway on August 4, 1995. The Scenic Byways Program of the Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) is administered by the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA). In January 1996, the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) recommended to the FHWA that the route be designated an All-American Road, a higher designation within the Scenic Byways Program. In 1997 the FHWA and the NPS entered into an agreement to coordinate and consolidate efforts for developing the route. ALDOT completed a Master Plan for the byway/road/trail in July 1999. All funding for developing the route is provided through the Scenic Byways Program.

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) will recommend interpretive and educational program strategies complementary with the CMP's management direction. It will be a component of the trail's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) as directed by National Park Service policy document Director's Order #6. Together with the annual interpretive plan and the interpretive database (produced and maintained by trail staff), the LRIP will provide direction and focus for the interpretive program for SEMO. This LRIP describes the historic trail's interpretive themes and visitor experiences, and recommends ways to

facilitate those experiences through facility design, interpretive/informational media, and personal services.

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan has been prepared in accordance with guidance for goal-driven, performance management (Government Performance Results Act of 1993[GPRA]). Planning for performance management will ensure that SEMO's daily interpretive/education actions are guided by established goals, and that performance can be measured and evaluated. This measurement will help SEMO determine how efficient and effective it is in fulfilling its mission.

TRAIL MISSION

To preserve and interpret the history of the sites associated with the 1965 voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.

TRAIL PURPOSE



Trail purpose is the reason or reasons for which a trail was established. These statements are based on the trail's enabling legislation and legislative history. Purpose statements are important to planning because they are basic to all other assumptions about the trail and the ways in which it should be used and managed. Long term goals are identified to meet congressional intent and fulfill SEMO's purpose. These goals can then be measured and performance evaluated.

The purpose of Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail is to:

- Commemorate the events, people, and route of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March of 1965 as a reminder of the right and responsibility of all Americans to fully participate in the election process, and that we must be ever vigilant in protecting our right to vote.
- Identify, preserve, and protect the historic route and resources that inform the world about the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March of 1965.
- Document, record, and interpret the story of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March of 1965-including its antecedents and aftermath-in the context of the larger human and civil rights struggle and movement.

- Enhance, nurture, and develop broad partnerships between the National Park Service, state and local governments, educational institutions, and various citizen groups to fulfill the trail's other purposes, such as designation as a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road.

SIGNIFICANCE



The significance of a trail is summarized in statements that capture the essence of the trail's importance to our natural and cultural heritage. Significance statements are not the same as an inventory of significant resources. While the resource inventory can be the basis on which significance is determined, the significance statements describe the importance or distinctiveness of the aggregate of resources along a trail. Knowing the trail's significance helps set resource protection priorities, identify primary trail interpretive themes, and develop desirable visitor experiences. Statements of significance describe the distinctive values of SEMO's resources, why these values are important within a national context, and why they contribute to SEMO's purpose.

Significance statements for SEMO are:

- Events associated with the march from Selma to Montgomery and from what came to be known as "Bloody Sunday" sent shock waves around the world, raised the nation's consciousness, and convinced political leaders that the time had come for voting rights legislation.
- The Selma to Montgomery march was the major catalyst for passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The marchers brought the issue of voting rights to the forefront of the United States' political agenda, and their peaceful means won broad support for their cause.

- Passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 five months after the Selma to Montgomery marches achieved the legal right to vote for all Americans, and forever changed the political life of the South and the United States as a whole. The Selma to Montgomery March remains one of the most significant civil rights protests in American history.
- The march route is the nation's first National Historic Trail to also be designated a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES



Interpretive themes are based on a site's purposes, significance, and primary resources. These themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting the trail. The themes provide the foundation for all interpretive programs and media developed. They do not include everything the trail may interpret, but they do cover those ideas that are critical to visitors' understanding of its significant resources. The interpretive themes for SEMO are:

1. The Selma to Montgomery March resulted in the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which enfranchised citizens previously denied the right to vote. This act changed and continues to change the political, economic, and social fabric of American society.
2. Fighting against the evils of bigotry and hatred, individuals risked their lives and livelihoods for the right to vote, bringing greater value and meaning to the democratic process.
3. Courageous and committed individuals, working through a variety of community institutions and nationally recognized groups, played pivotal roles in bringing about vast change to the social and political landscape of American society for present and future generations.
4. Through the use of nonviolent protest, ordinary people worked to mobilize and sustain the modern civil rights movement, a movement that became an example for other worldwide democratic movements.

5. The struggle of African Americans to realize the dream and right of full citizenship as guaranteed by the United States Constitution forced this country to live up to its ideals of equality for all.
6. The cultural landscape and environment is reflective of the social, economic, and legal systems that resulted in the modern civil rights movement, images of which helped shape the national reaction and response.
7. Selma, Alabama was selected as the starting point of the Voting Rights March of 1965 because of the convergence of several crucial political, social, and economic factors, which were inclusive of its location/geography.
8. The efforts of those involved in the Selma to Montgomery March are part of the continuum within the civil and human rights struggle of African Americans from slavery to modern times.

VISITORS/AUDIENCES

Because SEMO is a relatively new unit of the National Park Service, it has no formal visitor facilities or programs, and little opportunity to collect data on current visitors and what expectations they may have. This is a first effort, by a knowledgeable group of professionals who have worked with visitors to the SEMO area and those who are seeking the SEMO story, to define some of the important potential visitor groups and some of their expectations and interests.

- **Marchers and their families**
  - Validation of experience
  - Recognition of their role in the events
- **Young people**
  - Looking for "hands on" and interactive experiences
  - Seeking highly visual and motivational experiences
  - Generally have shorter attention spans
  - Are active
  - Respond to sounds in the environment
  - Usually do not read a lot of text
  - Want the "real stuff"
  - Enjoy reenactments and want to participate
  - Want things to take away (souvenirs)
- **Researchers**
  - Are looking for documented facts
  - Want to examine artifacts
  - Want images of the events
  - Want to experience authentic places
  - Want primary source material
  - Want personal staff attention
  - Want information quickly
  - May be interested in genealogy
  - Want information summaries-tapes, etc.

- **Education groups**
  - Want formal curricula indexed for the appropriate education level
  - Seeking activities appropriate to grade level/interest
  - Looking for outcomes consistent with established state and local education goals/guidelines
  - Some students want continuing education units
  - Can include Elderhostel groups

Characteristics of Grades K-3
- Basic information
- Short focused episodes
- Active
- Hands on
- Oral

Characteristics of Grades 4-6
- Can handle more complexity
- Longer programs
- Need reinforcing materials

Characteristics of Grades 7-9
- Developing writing skills
- Need context
- Need more disciplined activities
- Civics emphasized in school systems

Characteristics of Grades 10-12
- Developing complex writing skills

Characteristics of College Students
- Issue oriented
- Specifically focused
- Active
- Conduct research
- Interested in interview activities (i.e. oral history)

- **Senior Citizens**
  - Can have accessibility issues
  - Use tour guides
  - May need emergency services

- Need places to sit
- Like organized activities

- **Families**
- **People with disabilities**
  - Requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act
- **History/Heritage visitors**
  - Are seeking in-depth information
  - Are looking for authentic places/experiences
- **Commercial Tour Groups**
- **Family Reunion Groups**
- **Incidental Visitors**
  - Travelers/motorists using U.S. 80 as a transportation corridor

VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS



Visitor experience goals are statements that describe those fundamental visitor experience opportunities which the trail, through its visitor services and interpretive program, most wants to facilitate. Visitors cannot be required to have certain experiences, but SEMO identifies important experiences that should be available to them. In planning facilities, interpretive media, and personal services, Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail will work to create and enhance the opportunities for these experiences.

The common and unifying element to the designations of U.S. Highway 80 as both a National Historic Trail and National Scenic Byway/All-American Road is the route used for the 1965 voting rights march. Therefore, the treatment of this route is of special importance to the visitor experience.

Visitors to SEMO will have opportunities to:

- Be immersed in the march story, both physically and emotionally, by walking, bicycling, and/or driving at low speeds along portions of the original route.
- Understand the march and its people, places, and events in the context of the modern civil rights movement and the evolution of citizenship rights in the United States.
- Easily access orientation and activity planning information.

- Either experience the essence of the trail and its stories at several locations, or without actually visiting any of the sites.
- Choose from a range of activities that vary in length and depth.
- Be inspired to be an advocate for civil and human rights in their own communities.
- Understand the contrast between the social and political climate of the modern civil rights era vs. today.
- Learn about all of SEMO's themes through a variety of well-maintained interpretive media and quality interpretive services.
- Experience first hand accounts from the people who were a part of the 1965 Voting Rights Marches.
- Reflect on the modern civil rights era, the people, and social injustices.
- Experience authentic places related to the trail's history and significance.
- Understand and appreciate the value of the various trail corridor designations.
- Trace the original march route while driving the U.S. 80 corridor between Selma and Montomery, Alabama.
- Identifying the location of the historic march route and distinguishing it from non-historic portions of U.S. 80 built after 1965.

ISSUES AND INFLUENCES AFFECTING INTERPRETATION

The following is a list of items which have an impact on the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail's abilities to reach its interpretive and visitor experience goals:

- Funding is inadequate to meet trail needs
- Political interest -abundance and/or lack thereof
- Need to adhere to federal and state regulations
- Disappearance/survival/preservation of trail resources
- People involved in the events are dying
- Need for communication between and among diverse groups
- Lack of education about resource preservation
- Clarify the differences between the National Historic Trail and Scenic Byway
- Visitor/highway safety concerns
- Sensitivity of story and people involved
- Potential for vandalism
- How to protect resources along the trail corridor
- Trail planning documents are needed

  -Cultural Landscape Report

  -Environmental Impact Statements

  -Historic Resource Study

  - Scope of Collections Statement
- Maintaining highway standards without compromising historical integrity of the trail
- Acquisition of collection items/physical property/viewshed easements
- Establishing the trail's identity within the local/regional area
- Lack of sufficient signage
- Changing political environment
- Need for Memorandums of Agreement/documentation
- Lack of staffing to operate proposed facilities

- Develop new partnerships and strengthen existing ones
  - Corps of Engineers
  - Forest Service
  - USDA
  - ADECA
  - Tourism and Travel organizations
  - Educational Institutions
  - Friends Groups
  - Alabama Historical Commission
  - Local Historical Societies
  - Museums
    - Rosa Parks Museum
    - Tuskegee Sites
    - Tuskegee Multicultural Center
    - Marion County sites
    - Others
- National Park Service does not own any property
- Capacity for trail maintenance
- Intellectual property protection and purchase
- Role of Scenic Byway and All-American Road designation in the visitor experience.

RESOURCE-BASED INTERPRETIVE OPPORTUNITIES



People come to units of the National Park System to experience their heritage in real places-where historic events actually happened or where superior natural resources and processes can be experienced first hand. As SEMO develops, the trail will need to provide interpretive and visitor experience opportunities in places (outside of and in addition to the facility-based opportunities provided in its yet to be developed interpretive centers) where there are resources connected to the interpretive stories the trail is charged with telling. The length of the trail and the broad scope of its stories make it difficult to decide where to begin developing these interpretive opportunities.

The following list identifies under each of SEMO's interpretive themes the three to four most important places per county where the trail should first begin to facilitate interpretive opportunities.

These sites are in addition to the three proposed interpretive centers which will be located at the Lowndes Interpretive Center site in Lowndes County, near the City of St. Jude in Montgomery County, and in downtown Selma in Dallas County.

THEME 1:

The Selma to Montgomery March resulted in the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which enfranchised citizens previously denied the right to vote. This act changed and continues to change the political, economic, and social fabric of American society.

Dallas County

- Edmund Pettus Bridge
- Brown Chapel AME Church, First Baptist Church, Cecil B. Jackson Public Safety Building, Sullivan Building, Dallas County Courthouse (Historic Walking Tour Sites on MLK, Jr. Street and Alabama Avenue)
- Dallas County Voters' League Office

Lowndes County

- Camp Sites
- SNCC Freedom House Complex
- Lowndes County Jail (Hayneville 1965)

Montgomery County

- Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church
- Mt. Zion AME Church
- Oak St., Jefferson Davis St., Day St., Mobile St., Holt St., Dexter Avenue Corridor
- Alabama State Capitol

THEME 2:

Fighting against the evils of bigotry and hatred, individuals risked their lives and livelihoods for the right to vote, bringing greater value and meaning to the democratic process.

Lowndes County

- Camp Sites
- SNCC Freedom House Complex
- Mt. Gilliard Baptist Church
- Viola Liuzzo Marker

Montgomery County

- SNCC Freedom House
- Regal's Cafe
- Ben Moore Hotel

Dallas County

- Edmund Pettus Bridge

- RB Hudson High School
- Good Samaritan Hospital

THEME 3:
Courageous and committed individuals, working through a variety of community institutions and nationally recognized groups, played pivotal roles in bringing about vast change to the social and political landscape of American society for present and future generations.

Dallas County Dallas County
- First Baptist Church
- Brown Chapel AME Church
- Dallas County Voters' League Office
- Edmund Pettus Bridge
- Amelia Boynton's Home

Lowndes County
- SNCC Freedom House Complex
- Lowndes County Jail (Hayneville 1965)
- 2 Camp Sites (Steele & Gardner properties)

Montgomery County
- Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church
- Mt. Zion AME Church
- Holt St. Baptist Church

THEME 4:
Through the use of nonviolent protest, ordinary people worked to mobilize and sustain the modern civil rights movement, a movement that became an example for other worldwide democratic movements.

Lowndes County
- US Highway 80
- SNCC Freedom House Complex
- Camp Sites

Montgomery County
- Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church
- First Baptist Church
- Bus Station
- Alabama State Capitol

Dallas County
- RB Hudson High School
- Selma University
- Dallas County Voters' League Office

THEME 5:
The struggle of African Americans to realize the dream and right of full citizenship as guaranteed by the United States Constitution forced this country to live up to its ideals of equality for all.

Montgomery County
- Dexter Avenue Parsonage
- Federal Courthouse
- Alabama State University

Lowndes County
- Lowndes County Jail (Hayneville 1965)
- SNCC Freedom House Complex
- Lowndes County Courthouse

Dallas County
- Amelia Boynton's Home
- Camp Selma
- Dallas County Voters' League Office

THEME 6:
The cultural landscape and environment is reflective of the social, economic, and legal systems that resulted in the modern civil rights movement, images of which helped shape the national reaction and response.

Lowndes County
- Calhoun School and Ramah Church
- US Highway 80 viewshed
- Mt. Zion Christian Church School

Montgomery County
- Oak St, Jefferson Davis St., Day St., Mobile St., Holt St., Dexter Avenue Corridor
- Highway 31
- Centennial Hill and Alabama State University Area

Dallas County
- US Highway 80

- African American community voting rights area
- Cahaba (Alabama's first state capitol)

THEME 7:
Selma, Alabama was selected as the starting point of the Voting Rights March of 1965 because of the convergence of several crucial political, social, and economic factors, which were inclusive of its location/geography.

Dallas County
- Dallas County Voters' League Office
- Tabernacle Church
- Fathers of St. Edmonds Catholic Church

Montgomery County
- Alabama State Capitol area
- Federal Courthouse
- Maxwell and Craig Air Force Bases

Lowndes County
- US Highway 80
- Mt. Gilliard Baptist Church
- Bud Haralson's Store

THEME 8:
The efforts of those involved in the Selma to Montgomery March are part of the continuum within the civil and human rights struggle of African Americans from slavery to modern times.

Montgomery County
- Old Bus Station
- Alabama State Capitol
- Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church

Dallas County
- "Bloody Sunday" Point of Confrontation Site
- Dallas County Courthouse
- Slave Auction Center Site

Lowndes County
- Camp Sites
- Calhoun School and Ramah Church
- Mount Gilliard Missionary Baptist Church

EXISTING VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Existing Conditions

The trail was established in 1996 and there are no National Park Service facilities or operations to be found along the 54-mile corridor.

The trail commemorates historic sites along or near the route which are significant to the march and the voting rights struggle. These sites are a testament to the hardships endured and courage displayed by those who organized, marched, and lived the modern civil rights movement.

The Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail presents quite a challenge for visitors and trail interpretation. There is no managed entry and exit experience, no centrally located interpretive center providing basic trail -wide thematic and wayfinding orientation, and no clear and consistent signage to get visitors easily onto the trail and to deliver them to significant and affiliated interpretive locations.

Since the trail has only recently been staffed, there is no reliable information concerning the actual number of visitors who travel the 54 miles of road seeking information about its historical significance. To date, no National Park Service visitor surveys have been conducted at the site and no monthly visitor use statistics compiled.

Any visitor use information is purely anecdotal and gathered from the various affiliated sites along the trail and from individuals in Dallas, Lowndes, and Montgomery Counties who conduct private tours.

Pre-Arrival

Information specifically concerning the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail is not readily available, for the site does not yet have a National Park Service unigrid brochure containing a trail map. The trail is noted in the National Park Service National Trails System Map and Guide. A brief description of the trail and its history is contained in the guide, however, the contact information is outdated.

Trail staff respond to a small, and growing, number of mail and phone requests by sending out packets of materials containing a copy of the Alternatives Summary for the Comprehensive Management Plan, a signed letter from the site manager, and a SEMO lapel pin and patch. A pre -visit package also includes an interim site bulletin to be distributed until development of a unigrid brochure can begin in fiscal year 2003, as

well as a one-page handout containing updated SEMO information. A power point presentation is also available in CD format and provides information concerning the trail's mission and significance.

Trail brochures are requested, but the site does not have one for distribution. Some requests for information are forwarded from the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site headquarters or from the National Park Service's Southeast Regional Office in Atlanta. In addition, the trail headquarters has received specific requests by writers and researchers for information to aid in the development of articles pertaining to the voting rights march and the trail.

The park's web site contains very general information concerning the Selma to Montgomery voting rights march with additional information provided for "auto touring." Visitors are encouraged to drive the Highway 80 corridor from Selma to Montgomery and to contact the Chamber of Commerce in each community for sites of interest.

Historic sites along the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail are noted in several publications. A booklet produced by the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel, Alabama's Black Heritage, describes locations in Dallas, Lowndes, and Montgomery Counties. A brochure entitled, Central Alabama's Black Heritage Trail, identifies sites in Selma, Montgomery, and Tuskegee.

It should also be noted that the Alabama Department of Transportation has produced newsletters in the past which provided information concerning the site's designation as a National Historic Trail, All-American Road, and Scenic Byway. Items discussed in previous newsletters included the draft Master Plan, development of the Lowndes Interpretive Center site, composition of the Trail Advisory Council, and notice of public hearings.

Approaches

The Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail begins in Selma and follows US Route 80 west through Lowndes County, then US Route 65 north to the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery.

However, most visitors experience the trail from Montgomery to Selma without the assistance of any interpretive information. Without having received advance information, the majority of visitors see sites related to Rosa Parks and Montgomery's bus boycott history at the Rosa Parks Museum and of Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church. There are numerous affiliated sites in the city

which are designated by state historical markers, but locating them and navigating through city streets can be difficult and frustrating. This arduous experience can continue as visitors attempt to follow the trail from downtown Montgomery to US Route 65, then to US Route 80. There is a distinct lack of signage and signage that does exist can be misleading, such as "future site of exposition area."

Once visitors do make their way onto US Route 80, the only signage which exists, beyond the occasional markers with the trail logo, are those which denote the locations of the campsites along the march route. Also found along Route 80 is the Viola Liuzzo marker in Lowndes County, which commemorates the white Detroit housewife who was shot and killed by Ku Klux Klan members on March 25, 1965 while returning to Montgomery to shuttle march participants back to Selma.

Upon Arriving in Selma, a visitor can cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge and find his/her way to the local tourism office, the National Voting Rights Museum, or the Selma Historical Society Museum for further information.

Along the Trail Route

A brochure developed by the City of Selma with assistance from the National Park Service's Office of Rivers, Trails, and Conservation takes visitors on a self-guided walking tour of historic Martin Luther King, Jr. Street which includes thirteen wayside exhibit panels. The panels do not utilize NPS Harpers Ferry Center planning and design standards, are faded and damaged, and in need of replacement. The Selma/Dallas County Chamber of Commerce also distributes a self-guiding brochure describing Selma's Legacy of Black Heritage.

The Selma Chamber of Commerce occasionally arranges volunteer-led tours for organizations. The National Voting Rights Museum is a visitor destination for those seeking specific information pertaining to the voting rights struggle.

Site-specific informational handouts are available for sites in Montgomery, such as the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church. This is Martin Luther King Jr.'s first church, where he was launched into the modern civil rights movement, and which brought him on March 25, 1965 to the steps of the Alabama State Capitol to secure voting rights. Located along the trail route, the church offers tours six days a week, excluding Sunday. A video describing the church's history is shown to visitors, and a presentation given concerning a church mural. Current visitation is approximately 15,000/year.

The Rosa Parks Museum is also a visitor destination for those seeking more information about the modern civil rights movement. Located on the campus of Montgomery's Troy State University, the museum recently opened and hosted an exhibit of Spider Martin photographs chronicling the Selma to Montgomery voting rights march.

Currently there are no organized tours of the Selma to Montgomery NHT in Montgomery. The city of Montgomery offers a Black Heritage Trail tour brochure, which includes some sites related to the trail, but the main focus of the tour is not voting rights and the march itself.

Individuals in all three counties through which the trail traverses do offer customized tours for organizations and school groups at their request. Tour itineraries vary.

PERSONAL AND NON-PERSONAL SERVICES QUALITIES

Interpretive messages can be delivered in a variety of formats. Each has qualities which make it more or less suitable for a given application.

Personal Services

Personal interpretive services are those in which staff interact with visitors. Examples of personal services programs include the staffing of visitor/interpretive centers, talks, illustrated programs, conducted activities, special events, and educational programs. These programs take into consideration audience characteristics and available time.

Personal services that are most suitable for inclusion in the interpretive program are those that have been identified as potentially being the most successful in facilitating an exploration of the meanings inherent in the site. Personal services enable a direct human to human connection which is often more enjoyable to visitors than communication by impersonal media. These services can easily be customized to meet visitor needs or changing conditions, can be interactive, versatile, and effective.

Non-Personal Services

Non-personal interpretive services are those that do not require the presence of staff and can reach large audiences in a consistent way. Media such as exhibits, publications, and audiovisual presentations are some examples.

Exhibits

Good content, presentation, and execution make a good exhibit. This exhibit is story or idea driven, rather that object or collection driven. A balance will be determined between objects and story. Content must be accurate, represent multiple points of view, and be evaluated for appropriateness for visitors. The presentation should engage the visitor, appeal to different learning styles, and apply exhibit display techniques effectively. The presentation should logically organize, clarify, and support the content.

Exhibits can be viewed at a visitor's own pace and can transcend language and cultural barriers. They can promote the use of the senses and visitor participation. Exhibits can provide experiences of varying complexity, allowing visitors to select the level of information they choose.

Elements of exhibit presentation can include a variety of the following: text, photography, graphic design, original art/illustrations, artifact displays, models and reproductions, other three-dimensional elements such as topographic maps, mannequins, or dioramas, as well as audio-visual and computer interactive elements.

Exhibit space should be zoned to protect artifacts. Objects can be arranged in one general area or a specific display case in order to ensure an appropriate level of security, adequate climate control, and protection from harmful ultraviolet light.

Front-end, formative, and summative evaluation should be an integral component of the exhibit planning process. Front-end evaluation concentrates on getting inputs from potential visitors by means of interviews and/or focus groups to find out what kinds of information they need and would like to know, and how this information could be presented in a meaningful, interesting, and cost-effective way. Formative evaluation will help ensure that what design and content elements are proposed for an exhibit will be effective with the audience through the testing of prototypes. In a comprehensive evaluation program, summative studies often reveal problems that were not, or could not be, identified during the earlier stages of development. Consistent and progressive evaluation will lead to more effective and compelling exhibits, thus reducing the likelihood that new exhibits will be misunderstood or ignored by the visiting public.

Audiovisual

Audiovisual media is well suited to the presentation of chronological and sequential material. It can capture realism, provide emotional impact, and create a mood or atmosphere. Also, it can reach many visitors at one time and be portable for off- site use. Audiovisual elements may also be included in exhibits, in addition to being shown in dedicated theater spaces.

Wayside Exhibits

Wayside exhibits will offer visitors immediate and meaningful information tailored to site-specific events of the march. Outdoor exhibits have the advantage of direct site association and help visitors make connections with the persons, events, and places identified by the panels. They will enable visitors to experience the park and historic events firsthand. Additionally, waysides will help establish the trail's identity by simply providing visitors with the knowledge that they are in a National Park Service site. Wayside exhibits offer low tech, visually compelling interpretation 24 hours each and every day.

Publications

Publications are portable, can be used before going to a site, during the visit, or after returning home. They can be produced at various levels of detail, can be read at a visitor's own pace, can treat a subject in-depth, and are suited to presenting sequential or complex material.

INTERPRETATION

The promise of America culminated in the mid-twentieth century in a heroic campaign we call the modern civil rights movement. This movement sought the attainment of full citizenship for African Americans in the United States. Specifically, the movement focused on efforts to gain political, social, and economic rights such as equal education, access to places of public accommodation and transport, equal housing and employment opportunities, and the right to vote and hold political office. Generally acknowledged as beginning in the mid-1950s with the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas Supreme Court decision and the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, the movement gained full momentum during the late 1950s and 1960s. The 1965 Selma to Montgomery voting rights march has been identified by historians and movement participants as one of the last great protests of the modern civil rights movement.[2]

The modern civil rights movement involved many players, at both the national and local levels. Primarily a grassroots effort involving thousands of ordinary people - men and women, adults and children, black and white - the struggle drew both participants and leaders from existing organizations such as churches, labor organizations, and schools and colleges.[3]

The mission of the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail is to preserve and interpret the history of the sites associated with the 1965 voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. In an effort to dramatize to the nation and the world the need for voting rights legislation, a peaceful, nonviolent march from Selma to Montgomery was planned. On March 7, 1965, marchers set out from Brown Chapel AME Church towards Montgomery. Just beyond the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, they were brutally beaten by law enforcement officers. This bloody and horrendous event was televised to all across the nation. Two days later, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a second march from Brown Chapel AME Church which was peacefully turned around from the point of confrontation near the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Then on March 21, 1965, marchers, under the protection of the National Guard, left Brown Chapel AME Church and, after five days and fifty-four miles, successfully made their way to the steps of the state capitol. This monumental event that was captured by the media brought the struggle of voting rights for African Americans to the forefront of the nation's conscious. As a result, Congress enacted legislation that would guarantee voting rights for all Americans. Subsequently, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965, thus changing forever the American political landscape.



At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama. There is no Negro problem. There is no southern problem. There is no northern problem. There is only an American problem ...Every American citizen must have the right to vote... It is wrong - deadly wrong - to deny any of your fellow Americans the right to vote in this country. There is no issue of States' rights or National rights. There is only the struggle for human rights.

- President Lyndon B. Johnson
Introducing the Voting Rights Act to Congress, March 15, 1965

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following is a description of program and media recommendations designed to provide direction and focus for the future interpretive program for the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail.

The discussion of each program or media proposal identifies its purpose, special considerations, and sometimes suggests means of presentation. It is important to remember that the latter are only suggestions, and should not in any way limit the creativity that is essential during the program and media development processes.

It is essential that the trail initiate and maintain a continuous dialogue with members of the friends groups for Dallas, Lowndes, and Montgomery counties, many of whom are veterans of the march and the modern civil rights movement. Maintaining open communication is also important with federal and state agencies, local officials, educational institutions and surrounding communities regarding the planning, design, and production of theme-related interpretive media and programs.

Orientation and Information

Information regarding the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail will continue to be provided through traditional means by answering written and phone requests.

The current one-page informational handout can be expanded to a newsletter, similar in format to that produced in the past by the Alabama Department of Tourism. A useful addition to a pre-visit package, the newsletter would be an avenue for providing more detailed information to visitors and stakeholders.

Arrival and Signage

Staff at this new and developing site have recognized the importance of adequate signage, and have thus developed a sign plan for the trail. To better establish the trail as a National Park Service site, sizeable and attractive signage and pull-offs are needed at each end of the trail (including both ends of Route 80) to orient visitors even if they do not travel its length. Trail entry points should be established and the trail clearly marked from either direction. Signage is also needed to link affiliated sites that are not directly on the trail.

Improved signage is needed to direct visitors from downtown Montgomery to US Route 80. Directional signage should be standardized along the trail route and every effort should be made to work with local communities and organizations to ensure consistency with affiliated sites. All applicable Alabama Department of Transportation guidelines should be followed.

Access and the Landscape

Every effort should be made to help visitors experience landscapes in beneficial, enjoyable, and sustainable ways, and relate those experiences to more intangible values, meanings, and traditions. Interpretation can be linked to the landscape's ability to convey the past through its character and defining features. Landscapes need to be considered when addressing visitor experience goals, significance, and interpretive themes.

Presently there is no safe continuous pedestrian or bicycle access to the trail. This is a visitor experience that should be paramount in the development of the trail. Many visitors will be approaching the trail in a "pilgrimage-like" frame of mind and will want to walk or bike a portion or the entire 54 mile route. At a minimum, a walking and biking experience should be available from each of the three proposed interpretive centers.

Safe visitor access must be provided at important interpretive sites along the trail. Many will require safe auto pullouts, parking spaces, landscaping and mobility-impaired visitor access. These sites are noted in the draft wayside exhibit plan.

Interpretive Centers (Selma, Lowndes, Montgomery)

The function of a NPS interpretive center is to orient visitors to the site and area resources, services, and attractions. Another purpose is to interpret the trail story, as described by interpretive themes, and provide an overview of that story by emphasizing those story elements that are best told by indoor interpretive media. On-site educational programs will be offered at the interpretive centers, as well as at other trail locations and off- site venues. These facilities provide a focus, point of contact, and spatial and visual identity for a site.

The facility should be located close to or within primary visitor activity areas and be accessible to people with disabilities. Visitor reactions to the built environment should be consistent with visitor experience goals. There should be sufficient and suitable space maintained according to sustainability guidelines.

Orientation Exhibit

Visitors arriving in Selma, Lowndes Interpretive Center, or Montgomery may or may not have already traveled the length of the trail, received information at one of the NPS interpretive centers, stopped to read wayside exhibits, or visited an associated site. Upon arriving at one of the interpretive centers, the public may not be aware of the diversity and extent of trail resources. A standard orientation exhibit that is replicated in all trail interpretive centers can help visitors gain a better understanding of the trail's resources and their locations relative to each other. Visitors can locate themselves in the physical context of the march as well as orient themselves chronologically in the march story. This orientation should stand apart from the primary exhibit space so visitors can have a very general context of the march story prior to experiencing the exhibition.

This exhibit will be designed to work in conjunction with other orientation tools, including the following: park unigrid brochure, wayfinding signage, wayside orientation exhibits, and personal services orientation. A hierarchy of orientation elements will be presented, such as safety information, points of entry, etc. Orientation exhibits should be changeable, to accommodate updated trail information and various sites.

An element of the standard orientation exhibit can be an enlarged map that indicates all trail resources and associated areas. The map will be based on, and congruent with, the park unigrid brochure and wayside orientation maps. Due to its larger scale, the standard orientation exhibit map can show more details and have accompanying photographs and text regarding specific sites.

An orientation map to other civil rights sites in the region should be at all three interpretive center facilities as well.

Experience Organizer

This visitor experience organizing tool is intended to help visitors make informed choices regarding the sites and facilities they can potentially visit, depending on their length of stay and interests. Using brief text and associated visuals, this exhibit will use time estimates and visitor experience categories (if you have two hours and are interested in...) as its primary organizing principles. It may suggest logical visitor experience groupings, such as "sites related to early civil rights organizing efforts," or "churches associated with the march." Therefore, it is a logical companion to the standard orientation exhibit (described above) which shows where all visitor experiences are located. The experience organizer should also be replicated in all trail interpretive centers. This

exhibit will inform visitors about any time-sensitive decisions they may need to make, such as the closing hours of various sites along the trail and the times of any guided tours, either NPS or partner provided.

Wayfinding Signage

In order to experience the trail, a visitor must be able to navigate through unfamiliar streets. Well-designed, effective wayfinding is essential to an experience where a visitor can focus attention on the content of the story, rather than the anxiety of navigation. A series of upright panels or trailhead type markers to be used strictly for navigational purposes could be placed in several locations in Selma and Montgomery.

SPECIFIC SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following describes interpretive recommendations for specific sites along the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, beginning chronologically and sequentially with Selma in Dallas County, then moving on to Lowndes Interpretive Center and Lowndes County, and concluding, as the march did, in the city of Montgomery. Specific recommendations will be made for the three proposed interpretive center facilities in each county, then affiliated sites. Recommendations have also been developed for personal and non-personal interpretive services which are important for the site as a whole.

Because this story is one in America's recent past, the National Park Service has a unique opportunity to have it be told by those who lived history less than forty years ago. The significance of the changes in American society as a result of the modern civil rights movement cannot be underestimated. A floodlight was turned upon a dark corner of our collective history and we as a people would never be the same. This is a story wrought with emotion, an example of what individuals can accomplish when striving for justice, working with each other in times of challenge and controversy, fighting the evils of bigotry, hatred, misunderstanding, and silence. It is a universal story which reminds us of all of that has been accomplished and all that remains to be done.

The greatest challenge to interpreting this internationally significant historic trail is to ensure that visitors clearly understand how to best experience the resources and those of associated sites. The significance and uniqueness of the sites and stories in each county should be emphasized and how they relate to the events surrounding the march and the larger story of the modern civil rights movement and American history. The National Park Service sites should complement each other, build expectations for visitors, and facilitate that experience. Interpretive efforts must seek to avoid redundancy and strive to create different experiences that weave the whole story together.

Visitors will learn the human stories of struggle and victory. The meaning of the march, both then and now, will be placed in historical context. This is a site for reflection and of healing. Visitors should leave the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail feeling that they have walked on hallowed ground.

Universal Concepts

All NPS sites have tangible resources like physical features, buildings, and artifacts, as well as intangible resources like past events, people, sys-

tems, ideas, and values. Effective interpretation can be described as linking tangible resources to intangible resources that center around universal concepts, in order to reveal meanings. Universal concepts are intangible resources that, in one form or another, are common to all people. Not everyone will agree on the meaning of or share the same perspectives towards a universal concept, but all people will relate to the concept in some significant way. Universal concepts make meanings accessible and the resource relevant to a widely diverse audience.

SEMO Universal Concepts

This is not meant to be an all-inclusive list, but rather examples provided to generate discussion and additional concepts amongst trail staff.

Oppression/deprivation/fear/frustration/determination/faith/love/hate/strength/courage/resistance/hope/achievement/triumph/struggle/conflict/bigotry/violence/comradery/murder/tradition/freedom/support/power/truth/celebration/civil and human rights/change.

SELMA



The local black leadership in Selma was really responsible for the Selma movement. Selma was not a place that we picked out. We did not choose them, they chose us.

-Andrew Young

Selma, Alabama became the shining moment in the conscious of man...Confrontation of good and evil compressed in the tiny community of Selma generated the massive power to turn the whole nation to a new course.

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
March 25, 1965

Since the grassroots effort, organization, and march itself began there, it is a logical starting point for visitors. It gives the impression that Selma is the genesis for the voting rights movement -which is incorrect. Many activities were going on throughout the Southeast. Many of the activities led by Samuel Boynton and others actually took place outside of the city limits in the surrounding counties. Selma is the beginning of the trail and it is the place, which grabbed the attention of the nation; but Selma does not deserve all of the credit for the grassroots effort of the voting rights movement.

The stories told in Selma will connect to the established interpretive themes for SEMO and will focus on the fact that this was a community organized and led event, facilitated and supported by national civil rights leadership. Before the national organizations and media came to Selma, the leadership of the Dallas County Voters' League (known as the "Courageous Eight") took a stand and committed themselves to the cause of voting rights. These activists were fighting a racist system of literacy tests and poll taxes, but knew that they had the Constitution and the Bill of Rights on their side.

The range of interpretive opportunities in Selma are numerous and diverse. The town of Selma has an intimate quality and a physical size that lends itself to easy exploration.

Selma Interpretive Center



The proposed site of the interpretive center is a three story historic building on the corner across the street from the Edmund Pettus Bridge, and encompasses almost the entire city block of Water and Broad Street. The adjoining Goodwill building will house a theater and audiovisual elements, with a corridor allowing visitor access between the two buildings.

The interpretive center should contain: an information desk; exhibit space; dedicated space for education programs; a cooperating association bookstore; separate office space and storage for the City of Selma, SEMO and the cooperating association; temporary/traveling exhibit space. Another building on the block will be used for additional office space and a conference room. Since this interpretive center will utilize a historic structure, the services of a NPS historical architect will be needed to ensure that historic preservation and sustainable and accessible design goals are defined and achieved.

The first floor needs to be designed to meet a visitor's logistical needs and contain such information as orientation, activity planning, experience organizing, as well as provide needed services, such as access to a ranger, restroom facilities, and emergency services. The cooperating association bookstore will be located on this floor, as well as an entrance to the theater located in the building next door.



Exhibits

The power of place is extremely important at Selma. Exhibits should help visitors understand the Selma community's grassroots efforts that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The involvement of individuals from all walks of life, the arrival of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and later the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), is the story of an emotional journey that the community had embarked upon. The exhibits in Selma need to weave the story around the community and have it be the point of departure.

Exhibit content can also place the march in historical context by focusing on the history of oppression, segregation, socioeconomic factors, slavery (with the slave auction center site nearby) and the early organizational efforts of the community in the 1920s, 30s and 40s.

The exhibit experience can begin on the second or third floor of the building. Sight lines could be evaluated for not only the Edmund Pettus Bridge, but also to other significant sites, especially along the Martin Luther King, Jr. Street corridor. The current view outside could be contrasted with an interior model of the town from 1965 that can include possible audiovisual elements and static text. The exhibit experience would then move to the next floor and perhaps culminate with the dramatic view of the bridge. Visitors will be encouraged to explore the town and the sites associated with the struggle for voting rights.

Even though this story requires a context for the modern civil rights movement to be established through the media, a highly effective way for visitors to make personal connections to the march story is to use first person accounts throughout the spectrum of NPS media. Personal interviews with movement participants, those who assisted, and members of the white power structure who resisted change, will provocatively interpret this watershed event in American history.

Another way to let people tell their own stories is to make sure that the design of physical spaces allows for that. For example, alcoves can provide a place for march participants and people from the local community to tell their stories to the public.

Exhibit spaces can be rich with moving pictures that are integrated into the fabric of graphic panels, historically furnished vignettes, and interactive exhibit areas.

Artifacts, such as the letter inviting Dr. King to come to Selma, as well as replicas, like the supplies one would carry if expecting to be jailed, could be an integral component of the exhibit, along with art. Audiovisual elements, such as film footage and music, will be used. Exhibits should be accessible to children, with display objects that can be touched and interactive elements that can be manipulated.

Personal Services

Opportunities abound in Selma for a vibrant and enriching personal services program. For visitors to have access to as many interior spaces in the town of Selma as possible is very important. It is a powerful experience to actually be inside church sanctuaries where mass meet-

ings were held and words of justice, freedom, and nonviolence were spoken by individuals such as Martin Luther King, Jr. The National Park Service should develop strong relationships with the various church congregations and other organizations/sites, to ensure that visitors have access to these areas.

Selma is ideally suited for walking tours, given the town's small size and the relative ease with which one can navigate the streets. Walking tours that are developed need to relate to the stated interpretive themes and facilitate visitor experience. The first floor/lobby of the interpretive center should include a common area that can serve as a point of departure for walking tours. This area can also be utilized for brief interpretive talks and a place where march participants (potential volunteers) could interact with the public and share their experiences.

Ranger-guided tours can take visitors to Martin Luther King, Jr. Street to see the structures and discover the stories within those walls and along those sidewalks. These stories and structures include: the involvement of churches and their congregations, at First Baptist Church and Brown Chapel AME Church; the role of teachers highlighted at Clark Elementary School; the role of the community exemplified in the George Washington Carver neighborhood; the strategy of, and commitment to, nonviolence symbolized in a barricade called the Berlin Wall.

Walking tours can also include other significant areas of the city, such as the Cecil B. Jackson Public Safety Building where protestors including Martin Luther King, Jr. were jailed; the Sullivan Building, home to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and office of Courageous Eight member Amelia Boynton; the Dallas County Courthouse, the site where many African Americans attempted to register to vote.

Other potential sites for a walking tour include Tabernacle Baptist Church, which was the site of the first mass meeting on voting rights; the home of Amelia Boynton, where the letter inviting Dr. King to Selma was signed; the Dallas County Voters' League office, site of many Courageous Eight meetings; Selma University and R.B. Hudson High School, where support for voting rights came from teachers and students; Good Samaritan Hospital and Fathers of St. Edmonds Church. Given their distance from the proposed interpretive center, these tours can be offered occasionally, as special interest tours, and would be included in a self-guiding walking/driving tour booklet for the city.

A small riverfront park across the street from the proposed interpretive center could be a starting or concluding point for tours, as well as a

location for scheduled talks on a variety of topics connected to the site's interpretive themes. Guided tours can also include a walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, which would enhance the visitor experience through interpretive narrative.

Roving interpretation would be an important component of personal services in Selma. Especially while trail identity is being established and an interpretive services program developed, having uniformed rangers out and about in the community providing information and orientation will help solidify the National Park Service presence and role.

Special activities and presentations will be another component of the interpretive program in Selma. The theater space can be the site of public lectures and seminars, programs targeted for children and families, and illustrated talks.

Children's programs in Selma can range from specially tailored walks and talks, the establishment of a Junior Ranger program, and storytelling, to name a few. As Freeman Tilden noted in Interpreting Our Heritage, "Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best, it will require a separate program."

Equally important to experiencing the real places along the trail are hearing the stories from the real people who lived that history. Thus, the opportunity for visitors to meet, listen, and ask questions of march veterans must be a high priority. Visitors would be able to hear first-person accounts of different aspects of the story from varying perspectives.



Edmund Pettus Bridge

Perhaps the most powerful symbol of the voting rights march is the Edmund Pettus Bridge. The bridge became a focal point of the first two attempted marches from Selma to Montgomery, the first resulting in "Bloody Sunday" on March 7, 1965. It is a site that visitors are familiar with and want to see and experience. Currently, a walk across the bridge is not conducive to remembrance and connection, rather, it can be a jarring experience due to the volume of traffic and rather narrow walkway. However, visitors must be able to continue to have the experience of walking across the bridge, just as the marchers did back in 1965.

It is also critical that visitors are able to safely walk to the point of confrontation, and understand and reflect upon what occurred there. When marchers crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge and continued to the first traffic light at Selmont, they found the road blocked by state troopers with assistance from Sheriff Clark's posse. The marchers were ordered to disperse, and when they did not move, they were violently attacked. This is sacred ground and it should be treated as such. There is presently no safe access to the site, so an easement and proper compliance will need to be obtained. A destination site should be created which provides site-specific interpretation as well as a memorial setting, including a monument appropriate to commemorate the events that unfolded there, a seating area, and two wayside exhibits. This is a site of great emotion and reverence. Opportunities need to be created for visitors to pause and ponder. The current condition of the site creates a dangerous situation for visitors that is not at all reflective of its importance.



Wayside Exhibits

A list of proposed wayside exhibits from the draft wayside exhibit plan can be found in Appendix A, including subject, location, and style.

For example, orientation panels in Selma will be located at Martin Luther King, Jr. Street and at the foot of the Edmund Pettus Bridge across the street from the proposed interpretive center. These wayside exhibits will provide information enabling visitors to understand the events leading up to the march and the historical significance of the march to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. A timeline of

events might appear on the panel, as well as an interpretive map of Selma, identifying significant places and events. The map would have potential use in SEMO site bulletins for walking tours of Selma.

Publications

A self-guiding walking/driving tour site bulletin or booklet would be most appropriate in Selma, highlighting the significant sites mentioned above for the ranger-guided walking tour. Depending upon funding sources, this item could be offered free to visitors or could be sold by the cooperating association for a small fee.

As SEMO's interpretive staff develops over the next few years, one of their first tasks is to develop site bulletins to provide more detailed information on the trail's interpretive themes. Site bulletins pertaining to specific topics can supplement existing media and personal services programs. Topics can include the Courageous Eight and the foot soldiers of the movement, to name a few. Regional office staff can provide guidance for this park-directed effort, and HFC's Department of Publications can provide the unigrid format and graphic identity standards so that a consistent and professional NPS appearance is established and maintained.

LOWNDES INTERPRETIVE CENTER



It was like a holy crusade, like Gandhi's march to the sea. You didn't get tired, you really didn't get weary, you had to go. It was more than an ordinary march. To me there was never a march like this before, and there hasn't been one since. It was the sense of community moving there - as you walked you saw people coming waving, bringing you food or bringing you something to drink.

-Congressman John Lewis

If Selma is where the march began, then Lowndes County is where the test of commitment could be found. Lowndes County is a place of numbers; 43 miles of the march route between Selma and Montgomery are here; there were 0 registered African American voters in the county

in 1965, though they made up 85% of the population; 300 was the number of marchers allowed through the county by the U.S. Federal Court because the highway was only 2 lanes.

Lowndes County is a peaceful, rural landscape of cotton fields and farms. In 1965 it was a place of poor sharecroppers and oppressive poverty fraught with tension. These residents had much to lose for participating in the march or assisting marchers.

The majority of the African American population in Lowndes County worked as farmers, most as sharecroppers or tenant farmers on white - owned land. Even though the Voting Rights Act was signed into law on August 6, 1965, white landowners in Lowndes County retaliated against African American efforts to vote and gain political office by evicting approximately twenty tenant farm families from their land in December 1965. Some families left the state, some left the county, and some moved in with other family members. Those with no place to go established Lowndes Interpretive Center on an African American owned plot of land on Highway 80. Fifteen people lived in seven tents for nearly two years, enduring conditions such as a hepatitis outbreak.

The stories told at Lowndes Interpretive Center, also known as "Tent City" will connect to the established interpretive themes for SEMO, and will focus on the experience of marching and the risks involved. The stories presented in this interpretive center will be placed in historical context by examining life in the rural Black Belt of the South - what was it like to be poor, black, living in an era of Jim Crow without the right to vote? What did you do when you had everything to lose, yet everything to gain?

Lowndes Interpretive Center



Tent City will be the site of a newly constructed interpretive center and rest area. The facility is being constructed by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), with the National Park Service responsible for the planning, design, and fabrication of exhibits and providing visitor orientation and interpretive services. The site will also be a state rest area maintained by ALDOT.

The interpretive center will contain: exhibit space; a theater; National Park Service and State Travel and Tourism information desk; cooperating association bookstore; separate office space and storage area for SEMO and the cooperating association. Lowndes Interpretive Center offers the opportunity to place an orientation exhibit in the central hallway of the building so that it is protected from the weather and is accessible to visitors even when the interpretive center is closed.

Although current plans do not call for it, a section of the historic road should be easily accessible from the interpretive center. This is an ideal location for visitors to walk in the footsteps of history, for they will already be out of their cars and in a safe place to park with access to necessary facilities.

The Lowndes Interpretive Center will be the first facility open to the public in 2004. The interpretive centers in Selma and Montgomery are scheduled to open to the public in 2008. Therefore, initially Lowndes Interpretive Center will be the only National Park Service site where visitors will be able to learn about the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail. This facility will need to meet a visitor's logistical needs and contain not only orientation information, but also provide needed services, such as access to a ranger, restroom facilities, and emergency services.

Exhibits

The relationship of the building to the historic landscape is an important one. Any views from the exhibit space out to the Lowndes Interpretive Center site must be carefully considered. The relationship of Lowndes Interpretive Center to the 1965 march is a potentially confusing one for visitors. The fact that the impact of the voting rights march led to the creation of Lowndes Interpretive Center should be addressed very clearly and simply at the beginning of the exhibit. The visitor experience should be controlled so that there is a clear differentiation between the two stories. If at all possible, the view outside should not be visible until the proper point in the story. This will allow for the proper context to be established. When the view is revealed, it can be combined with interior exhibits and possible audio elements beneath the windows that relate to the landscape.

The exhibit area should contain gathering spaces for interpretive talks that are integrated with exhibits and the theater. The Lowndes Interpretive Center story will be placed in context with the march story. Personal vignettes can be utilized to explore the experience of marching and the risks involved for not only the marchers, but those who assisted

them. Experiential exhibit experiences can be employed to provoke visitor thought and discussion. Barrier-free, hands-on opportunities and discovery techniques will enable visitors to get a powerful sense of the country, the state, and the county in 1965. Large-scale visuals could also be used effectively.

Even though this story requires a context for the modern civil rights movement to be established through the media, a highly effective way for visitors to make personal connections to the march story is to use first person accounts throughout the spectrum of NPS media. Personal interviews with movement participants, those who assisted, and members of the white power structure who resisted change, will provocatively interpret this watershed event in American history.

Artifacts, such as meeting announcements and marching attire, as well as replicas and art, could be an integral component of the exhibit. Audiovisual elements, such as film footage and music, will be utilized. Exhibits should be accessible to children, with display objects that can be touched and interactive elements that can be manipulated.

Personal Services

Varied opportunities exist for a resource immersion experience at Lowndes Interpretive Center. As in Selma, the opportunity for visitors to meet, listen, and ask questions of march veterans must be a high priority. Visitors would be able to hear first person accounts of different aspects of the story from varying perspectives.

Brief ranger-led talks can also be presented in the interpretive center or at the outdoor pavilion, thus allowing for a more in-depth exploration of trail themes and exhibit elements. Illustrated programs can also be presented in the theater.

Special activities and presentations will be another component of the interpretive program in Selma. The theater space can be utilized for public lectures and seminars, programs targeted for children and families, and illustrated talks.

Children's programs should be developed and linked to the trail's interpretive themes. They can range from specially tailored walks and talks, the establishment of a Junior Ranger program, and storytelling, to name a few.

> *When they came to me and asked me if they could use my land, I felt I couldn't afford to turn them down. If the President can take a stand, I guess I can, too. I almost felt like I might live long enough to vote myself.*
>
> -Rosie Steele
> 78 year old landowner,
> Lowndes County

Also discussed during the interpretive planning process was the development of a trail from the interpretive center to Mt. Gilliard Church to the west, and possibly extending to the east to Rosie Steele's property. Mount Gilliard was the first church in Lowndes County to permit mass meetings to be held during the voting rights movement, and the Rosie Steele farm was the campsite for the second night of the march. This trail will allow visitors to walk or bike a part of the march route and have access to one of the campsites, which would be an exciting interpretive opportunity. The trail at Lowndes Interpretive Center would give visitors access to authentic places at an otherwise isolated location.

The resource immersion experience can go beyond that of walking a portion of the historic march route to experiencing a demonstration cotton field for education programs. Cotton was and still is grown along US 80 between Selma and Montgomery. The story of cotton is a story of our nation. Cotton is part of the cultural landscape of the march route and connected to the Lowndes Interpretive Center story. The opportunity for visitors, especially children, to view a cotton field next to the Lowndes Interpretive Center is an experience that should be facilitated.

Wayside Exhibits

A list of proposed wayside exhibits from the draft wayside exhibit plan can be found in Appendix A, including subject, location, and style.

At the Lowndes Interpretive Center complex, several wayside exhibits are proposed. Upright orientation exhibits will be located at the front and rear entrances to the building. Two wayside panels that interpret the march will overlook the route to the south. An introductory exhibit will be located near the east exit of the interpretive center leading to the Lowndes Interpretive Center site. The visitor experience when walking out of the building should be reflective of the march aftermath - the cost for freedom. In addition, two wayside panels will be placed in the pavilion to interpret the Lowndes Interpretive Center story. This is an effective location that will allow visitors the opportunity to reflect upon the story and the significance of the site while sitting in the shade of the pavilion.

Publications

As SEMO's interpretive staff develops over the next few years, one of their first tasks is to develop site bulletins to provide more detailed information on the trail's interpretive themes. Site bulletins pertaining to specific topics could supplement existing media and personal services programs. Topics could include: early organizing efforts by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the area; the legacy of Jim Crow in the South; post-march civil rights organizing, to name a few. Regional office staff can provide guidance for this park-directed effort, and HFC's Department of Publications can provide the unigrid format and graphic identity standards so that a consistent and professional NPS appearance is established and maintained.

MONTGOMERY



We are to engage in the greatest march that has ever been made on a state capitol in the South. ...I believe this march will go down as one of the greatest struggles for freedom and dignity in the nation's history.

-Dr. Martin Luther King,
March 24, 1965

Montgomery is not only where the march ended, but where much of the support for the journey was provided. Food, housing, and funds came from Montgomery's citizens, churches, and businesses.

After leaving Lowndes County, through which the majority of the route traverses, the marcher's ranks swelled again and more than 10,000 people arrived at the City of St. Jude to participate in the last leg of the walk and to enjoy the Stars for Freedom Rally. The following day, March 25, the march culminated with 25,000 strong reaching their final destination at the Alabama State Capitol.

The stories told in Montgomery will connect to the established interpretive themes for SEMO, and will focus on not only the story of the support role of the community, but also the political story - the national struggle for civil and human rights. The roles of national leaders such as President Lyndon B. Johnson and state leaders such as Alabama Governor George Wallace, the role of government, and the clash with the white organizational power structure will be explored. Visitors will learn about what role other groups, be they from Hollywood or a local white citizens council, had to play in politics, the march and its aftermath and how the ability to draw attention to an issue can have political ramifications. This site should also be where the stories of societal change are discussed - an examination of what work has been done to realize the dream of equality, freedom, and justice - and what work remains in the struggle for civil and human rights in this country and around the world.

Montgomery Interpretive Center



The proposed site of the interpretive center is an area across the street from the City of St. Jude complex which is currently a strip mall. This location has great potential due to its proximity to the St. Jude complex and its visibility from the interstate highway. The National Park Service should take full advantage of this close proximity by providing a pedestrian path through the site of the last campsite and the Stars for Freedom Rally. This area should also become a stop on the city's trolley route, linking it with other major visitor destinations in Montgomery.

Since no building designs currently exist for the site that has been identified as the future interpretive center facility, only general recommendations can be made at this time. The scope of potential new media at Montgomery is far less defined than at either the Selma or Lowndes Interpretive Centers. If the Harpers Ferry Center media team can be involved with the Montgomery interpretive center architectural team early in the development process, then interpretation can influence the function and structure of the building itself.

A new facility constructed on this site would include: an information desk; exhibit space; a theater; research area, including curatorial storage and a library; separate office and storage space for SEMO and the cooperating association; administrative offices; cooperating association bookstore; a common area that can serve as a location for brief interpretive talks and a place where march participants (potential volunteers) could interact with the public and share their experiences.

The role and function of this facility will also include classroom space for education groups. The opportunities for curriculum-based educational programming is tremendous, from elementary school to college students. National Park Service areas have been called the nation's greatest universities without walls. The National Park Service has always provided authentic learning experiences through access to cultural and natural resources.

Exhibits

Exhibit content can also place the march in historical context by focusing on Montgomery's role in the modern civil rights movement. The Montgomery bus boycott of 1955 is generally considered by historians and movement participants as the first great protest of the movement and the 1965 Selma to Montgomery voting rights march the last.



Exhibits in Montgomery can note the history of St. Jude and its connection to African American history in the community. St. Jude was the only integrated hospital in the Southeast at the time and it was a safe haven for the marchers. The mission of St. Jude, then as now, is religion and social services. If an exhibit objective is to highlight that civil and human rights work continues today, then St. Jude can be an example and incorporated into the exhibits. The Stars for Freedom Rally was held behind the rectory and the current football field was the site of the fourth and final campsite. The area located behind St. Jude was called the "liberated zone" and many leaders of the movement and celebrities participating in the march stayed in these private homes. Those in Montgomery supported the march through such services as lodging, food, and transportation. Planning meetings were held in Montgomery and veterans of the bus boycott provided expertise. African American businesses provided financial support for the march and held fundraisers.

Artifacts, such as signs held or buttons worn during the march, as well as replicas and art, could be an integral component of the exhibit. Any audiovisual elements, such as film footage and music, will be utilized. First hand accounts will enable visitors to learn about history from those who lived it. Another way to let people tell their own stories is to make sure that the design of physical spaces allows for that. For example, alcoves can provide a place for march participants and people from the

local community to tell their stories to the public. Exhibits should be accessible to children, with display objects that can be touched and interactive elements that can be manipulated.

Personal Services

As in Selma and Lowndes Interpretive Center, the opportunity for visitors to meet, listen, and ask questions of march veterans must be a high priority. Visitors would be able to hear first person accounts of different aspects of the story from varying perspectives.

The sprawling nature of Montgomery does not lend itself to the same types of walking tours as Selma. Occasional, special interest tours can be offered to historic sites in Montgomery, such as the state capitol area. However, brief ranger-led talks presented in the interpretive center would be best suited for this section of the trail, thus allowing for a more in-depth exploration of trail themes and exhibit elements. Illustrated programs can also be presented in the theater. Guided walks can be conducted to the City of St. Jude and the final campsite and Stars for Freedom Rally site.

Special activities and presentations will be another component of the interpretive program in Montgomery. The theater space can be utilized for public lectures and seminars, programs targeted for children and families, and illustrated talks.

Children's programs should be developed and linked to the trail's interpretive themes. They can range from specially tailored walks and talks, the establishment of a Junior Ranger program, and storytelling, to name a few. As Freeman Tilden noted in *Interpreting Our Heritage*, "Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best, it will require a separate program."

Wayside Exhibits

A list of proposed wayside exhibits from the draft wayside exhibit plan can be found in Appendix A, including subject, location, and style.

For example, the Montgomery-City of St. Jude interpretive center site would have orientation panels containing information to help visitors understand the culminating events of the march and their historical significance to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The panel(s) would identify the role Montgomery played in the march, highlight the march route from St. Jude to the state capitol, and identify significant



march sites and associated Montgomery civil rights sites. The exhibit map created for this project could have potential use in a site bulletin or booklet used for a driving tour of Montgomery.

Wayside exhibits are also proposed for a loop trail at the City of St. Jude. These panels would discuss the City of St. Jude's history of working with the African American community, the "liberation zone" located near the site, and the Stars for Freedom rally. This trail will also enable visitors to experience the fourth and last campsite along the march, an important interpretive opportunity to facilitate.

Publications

Developed specific to Montgomery would be a self-guiding driving tour site bulletin or booklet highlighting significant sites throughout the city. Depending upon funding sources, this item could be offered free to visitors or could be sold by the cooperating association for a small fee.

As SEMO's interpretive staff develops over the next few years, one of their first tasks is to develop site bulletins to provide more detailed information on the trail's interpretive themes. Site bulletins pertaining to specific topics could supplement existing media and personal services programs. Topics could include Governor George Wallace and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., - a contrast in character, or the role of African American churches in the civil rights movement. Regional office staff can provide guidance for this park-directed effort, and HFC's Department of Publications can provide the unigrid format and graphic identity standards so that a consistent and professional NPS appearance is established and maintained.

OVERALL TRAIL NEEDS

AUDIOVISUAL

The struggle for civil rights is a story first brought to the nation and the world via the media. There exists an enormous amount of material in audiovisual format which can be garnered to share with the public. Examples of media types which could be utilized include: stock footage from television networks; still photography from various sources; audio from local and national radio broadcasts; interviews done before, during, and after the marches.

Interpretive Center Film

There is a need for a general overview of the entire story surrounding the voting rights march so that visitors can place this moment in time within the context of the civil rights movement. Visitors can then have a sense of its legacy and continuing impacts.

This production should include interviews with participants mixed with newsreel footage of the events that took place. This overarching story would last approximately 20 minutes and be presented in theaters at each of the three interpretive centers. This is an American story, and one of healing.

Exhibits

Media developers should take full advantage of the resources available. In the case of the modern civil rights movement, much of the story was documented not only with still cameras, but also on film. In the exhibits to be developed there will be a blurring of the lines between the exhibit and audiovisual media, so that visitors can feel a dynamic sense of the march, that they are being transported back in time and are witnesses to a non -violent revolution of values and ideas.

Oral History Interviews

Interview criteria and objectives, as well as a list of potential interviewees, should be developed as soon as possible. Interviews can subsequently be conducted and transcribed. An oral history project should be initiated beyond any immediate media production needs.

Website

SEMO staff will work with Jacksonville State University, utilizing Challenge Cost Share funds, to expand and improve the current website. More detailed trip planning material than is currently available will be added, as well as links to other thematically related websites, such as

those pertaining to civil rights or African American history. These links can relate not only to other National Park Service sites, but museums and historic sites such as the National Civil Rights Museum or the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

The website can become a very important pre -arrival tool, and updates are essential. It will include safety and site accessibility information, as well as address the needs of groups, such as family reunions or heritage tours. The website should be accessible to all visitors.

Information concerning the sites along the trail route and affiliated sites will be organized geographically, as well as sequentially. The website will provide an introduction to all trail themes.

SEMO's website can be enhanced to provide additional information to the public concerning trail development, especially as visitor facilities and interpretive programs are designed and produced.

As trail staff increase and projects are developed materials can be posted to the website, such as curriculum-based educational materials for teachers, a trail newspaper, and a bibliography to encourage the public to seek more information about the voting rights march, the civil rights movement, and US history. Oral history interviews can also be added to the site, as well as clips from historic newsreels.

The website should be designed with a hierarchy of information, so that the user can become progressively more involved in the site depending upon his/her interests. For example, the site can be very interactive, with an audio component and a virtual tour of the trail and affiliated sites. Such a virtual visit would be valuable for visitors who can never physically experience the trail.

CD/CD-ROM

A compact disc and audiocassette can be produced by the trail's cooperating association or another partner for use along the entire 54 mile route. Such a driving tour could utilize a site bulletin or booklet, or the audio piece could be a stand- alone interpretive experience. Either in conjunction with written material or as a separate entity, this compact disc and audiocassette could be sold or rented at the interpretive center. Visitors would be guided along the trail and receive interpretive messages at various locations associated directly with SEMO or affiliated civil rights sites.

In addition, an interactive CD-ROM and DVD developed as a component of an educational outreach initiative could be a useful tool.

Distributed to educational institutions throughout the country, it would be designed to enhance the core curriculum of local, state, and national school systems. Linked to the trail's primary interpretive themes and utilizing first person accounts and songs of the civil rights movement, and the voting rights march in particular, information concerning the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail and its creation and mission can be conveyed to diverse educational audiences.

Spider Martin Photograph Collection

Critical to the success of overall media efforts at SEMO is the ability to obtain access to Spider Martin's Selma to Montgomery photograph collection. It is a compelling and comprehensive collection that chronicles the march and its associated events from beginning to end. This collection is a site-specific history of the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, and without it, the ability to tell the story through media will be greatly diminished. Every effort should be made to secure the appropriate use rights for these images.

Traveler Information System

It may be of benefit to explore the advantages vs. disadvantages of a Traveler Information System (TIS). This system is utilized by numerous NPS sites throughout the country to relay safety and orientation information to visitors via an AM radio frequency. However, additional information is required as to the type and amount of information that can be in the system.

PUBLICATIONS

Various publications have been mentioned previously in this document, including site bulletins to be offered at specific interpretive centers to supplement and enhance the major interpretive stories presented at those sites. Specific recommendations are to:

- Develop a comprehensive, trail-wide interim site bulletin with an accurate map and information about affiliated sites.
- Design and develop a trail map with the coordination of all relevant HFC departments.
- Produce a trail newsletter which can provide information to visitors and partners concerning the development of trail facilities and interpretive services, as well as related partner and community news.
- Have Harpers Ferry Center design and produce an official park unigrid brochure. Development can begin once the Comprehensive Management Plan is completed; the average time frame for completion is from one to two years.

- Design and produce a rack card which can be distributed to travel and tourism bureaus, area attractions, lodging facilities, conferences and conventions. Rack cards are less expensive to produce and can be supplied in greater numbers than the official trail brochure.
- Develop and distribute a standard information packet with a cover letter utilizing NPS graphic identity standards.
- Develop and distribute site bulletins that address primary theme elements as noted in other sections of the plan.
- Develop and design self-guiding walking/driving tour site bulletin or booklet for use in Selma.
- Develop and design self-guiding driving tour site bulletin or booklet for use in Montgomery.
- Develop and design a site bulletin or booklet for use with compact disc and audiocassette which would guide visitors along the 54 mile length of the trail.
- Develop and distribute a site bulletin or booklet to identify affiliated sites, with these sites producing their own more detailed informational handouts available for visitors.
- Develop, design, and distribute a trail newspaper (2x/year) once interpretive facilities and services are firmly established. This publication can be a useful trip planning tool, noting program schedules, changing information, articles focusing upon specific aspects of march/movement history, and highlighting affiliated sites, to suggest a few items.
- Research, design, and produce a trail handbook (beyond 5-10 yr. life span of plan).
- In partnership with other NPS units, research, design, and produce a handbook encompassing all NPS civil rights sites.

All publications will follow NPS graphic identity standards, thus ensuring high quality and creating a sense of identity for SEMO as a unit of the National Park Service.

EDUCATION

Changing demographics, emerging technologies, and national priorities are necessitating different approaches in the field of education. Educational institutions are developing national standards, and educators are seeking authentic learning experiences for their students as well as professional development opportunities to further their own knowledge and understanding.

There are exciting possibilities for educating broad sectors of society - people of all ages and ethnicities, even if they never visit an NPS area. Understanding different perspectives and making programs and materials relevant to diverse groups increases the potential to engage millions throughout the country in learning about the parks, the resources, and the importance of stewardship.

Understanding the relevance of past experiences to present conditions allows us to confront today's issues with a deeper awareness of the alternatives before us. Standing in front of Little Rock's Central High School or in Topeka's Monroe School or on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma makes the Civil Rights era come alive, and strengthens our sense of the past, of the many voices of which it is made.

Educators tell us that linking classroom learning with experiences in the field produces better results. When what is learned in school is connected to nature's classroom, or the classrooms of historic sites, students better remember content, gain stronger skills, and adopt new values and behaviors.

The study of our nation's history, formal and informal, is an essential part of our civic education. In a democratic society such as ours, it is important to understand the journey of liberty and justice...and the distances yet to be covered. Parks should be...springboards for personal journeys of intellectual and cultural enrichment.



The National Park Service must ensure that the American story is told faithfully, completely, and accurately. The story is often noble, but sometimes shameful and sad. In an age of growing cultural

diversity, the Service must continually ask whether the way in which it tells these stories has meaning for all our citizens.[6]

There can be no more powerful and provocative "university without walls" than the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail. There would not have been a modern civil rights movement without the involvement of the youth of this country. Children from as young as age 6, to college students, placed their lives on the line in the struggle for freedom, justice, and equality - rights that most children take for granted - let alone think of fighting for. The educational opportunities at this site are vast and exciting. New generations can learn about the struggle, consider the cost of hard won victories, and be inspired to carry on the legacy of positive action to make this world a better, more just place for all people.

The greatest resource that SEMO has is the fact that so many veterans of the voting rights march and the civil rights movement in general still live in the community. Every effort should be made to incorporate march and movement participants in the development and presentation of education programs. Such first person accounts are a direct link to the past which will provide the opportunity for history to come alive for teachers and students.

Learning in parks is especially powerful, for real places, things, and authentic stories offer people a better understanding of history. The specific recommendations for SEMO are:

- Provide teachers and other educators with the interpretive information necessary to use the park as an outdoor classroom.
- Facilitate opportunities for direct personal experiences with trail resources.
- Increase awareness, understanding, and stewardship for this and other NPS areas by students and educators.
- Create an education advisory committee to build partnerships and advise trail staff of changing educational standards, philosophy, skills, and techniques.
- Provide on and off site educational programming.
- Use new technologies and media to reach new audiences, such as those available for long-distance learning. This is especially important for people who may never visit an NPS site or have no knowledge that the national park system exists.
- Utilize focus groups, and front-end, formative, and summative evaluation in the development of educational materials.

- Link NPS and non-NPS sites thematically and develop agreements with institutions which share an interest in broadening the influence of education to make resources more accessible and useful to the public.
- Make every effort to understand different perspectives and make programs and materials relevant to diverse groups.
- Train teachers to use resource information in classrooms.
- Link the objectives of educational programs to state and local standards.
- Work with local and state departments of education and local teachers to create curriculum-based programs and materials and to develop standards of excellence.
- Develop cooperative programs to foster opportunities for research, internships, materials development, evaluation, and mentoring.
- Develop a Junior Ranger program which reflects park themes. It can include activities encouraging children to reflect on the changing meaning of freedom, equality, justice, individual choice, and sacrifice, for example.

Partnerships are important, for they offer connections to new audiences, assist in the delivery of information, and provide valuable input relative to content development.



The trail, in conjunction with its partners, will develop an education plan tied to the themes set forth in this document. Consultation with local teachers and school districts will be fundamental to determine what grade levels to target, how best to address state curriculum requirements, and how trail staff can work most effectively with school systems. Teacher involvement from the beginning stages of any plan development will be critical to ensure the success of future educational programs. This plan should also incorporate other NPS educational strategies and efforts, at both the regional and national level.

As noted in the National Park Service's Management Policies 2001, curriculum-based educational programs link park themes to national stan-

dards and state curricula, and involve educators in planning and development. These programs usually include pre -visit and post -visit materials, address different learning styles, include an evaluation mechanism, and provide learning experiences linked directly to clear objectives. Programs develop a thorough understanding of a park's resources in individual, regional, national, and global contexts, and of the park's place within the national park system.

To be successful, a park education program will require that an education specialist position be established, with interpretive staff assisting in the development and presentation of programs. The education specialist will be responsible for establishing the education advisory committee and working with partners and staff to develop an education plan for the trail. This position would also be responsible for managing on and off site curriculum-based programming and seeking funding through grants such as Parks as Classrooms. Programming would include field trips to the trail, teacher workshops, visits to classrooms, and providing resource materials to educators in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Another area to be explored in the educational arena is that of sustained learning. Working with partners such as Alabama State University and the Southern Poverty Law Center, the trail can create sustained learning environments for various age levels. It could be the experience of staying overnight at one of the historic campsites to learn about the march experience, perhaps from a veteran of the Selma to Montgomery march, or gathering off site to discuss civil and human rights today, what problems exist around the world and how individuals and groups are addressing these issues. Activities and curriculum can be designed to increase in complexity and level of involvement as students advance in the educational system. This notion of progressive involvement and sustained learning should include adults, especially an ever-growing population of Elderhostel groups.

There exist several programs which can aid in the development of an education program at SEMO:

1) **Parks as Classrooms** is a nationally recognized program that was established in conjunction with the National Park Foundation.

2) **Teaching with Historic Places** is administered by the National Park Service through the National Register of Historic Places to promote the use of the official districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture in teaching history, social studies, geography, and other subjects.

TRAINING

It is recognized that all staff have a role in providing effective visitor services and achieving the NPS mission. Whether permanent or seasonal, cooperating association employee or volunteer, each employee must have an understanding of the trail's resources, interpretive themes, and visitor experience goals.

Training for all staff should be presented concerning the history of the voting rights march, the civil rights movement, effective communication skills, as well as excellent customer service. Development opportunities should be offered to trail staff to broaden their awareness of the relationship between their work, trail goals, and the NPS mission.

Training for interpretive staff will include interpretive philosophy, interpretive skills, subject matter knowledge, African American history, operations procedures, and an overview of NPS programs, policies, and initiatives. The Interpretive Development Program curriculum will be fully implemented, including participation in the interpretive competencies program. Training, auditing, critiquing, and evaluation should be provided on an ongoing basis to ensure quality interpretation.

Trail staff can invite noted scholars and march and civil rights movement participants to present research and information during training sessions.

Park interpreters and others who work with the visiting public need to keep abreast of current research, programs, techniques, activities, and technologies as they relate to trail resources, personal services, media, visitor studies, etc.

After employee development needs have been assessed, individuals should then be encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities. For example, detail assignments can be arranged, such as one at Harpers Ferry Center for the Interpretive Media Specialist and Media/AV Technician positions called for in the staffing plan.

Every opportunity should be made for trail partners to participate in interpretive skill and resource training if they engage in interpretive, education, and information/orientation activities.

LIBRARY/COLLECTION RESEARCH NEEDS

Library

Being a recently established unit of the National Park Service with very few staff members at present, the site has only just begun to purchase books and reference materials for a library. Established NPS sites with similar themes, such as Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS, should be contacted to obtain bibliographies to aid in the development of this important trail resource. Bibliographies can also be requested from a variety of local and regional institutions, such as the Rosa Parks Museum, Alabama State University, National Civil Rights Museum, and the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. Reference materials should relate to a variety of topics, including National Park Service history, preservation and conservation, United States history, landscapes, Alabama state history, African American history, and specifically the modern civil rights movement. Adequate annual funding needs to be allocated so that the library and its resources can continue to grow and reflect the most recent scholarship. Trail staff will also enter library resources into the PROCITE database, which is the NPS standard and available through the NPS Library Information Center. The library will be housed in the trail offices located in Montgomery.

Collection

The Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail does not have a museum collection at this time, though that situation is expected to change as objects are acquired for inclusion in interpretive center/museum exhibits. Trail staff are currently completing a Scope of Collections Statement to define the scope of future museum collection holdings that contribute directly to the understanding and interpretation of the trail's purpose, themes, and resources that must be preserved by Federal mandate. This document is designed to ensure that all museum objects are clearly relevant to the trail.

SEMO can acquire objects for its museum collection by gift, purchase, exchange, transfer, field collection, and loan. Acquisition of museum objects is governed by its ability to manage and preserve them according to NPS *Management Policies,* Director's Order #28, *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, and the NPS *Museum Handbook.* Museum objects must be acquired, accessioned, catalogued, and conserved in accordance with the NPS Museum Handbook. It is expected that the museum collection will include a photo and paper archive, as well as oral history interview tapes and transcriptions, among other items.

SEMO's museum collection may be used for exhibits, interpretive programs, research, publications, or other interpretive media. The primary consideration in the use of museum objects is the conservation of each object in question and of the collection as a whole.

In order to establish and sustain a collections management program, a curator/museum specialist position is noted in the staffing section of the plan. The duties and responsibilities of this position would directly support the interpretive function of the trail and requires specific training in NPS museum standards. Planning needs for the program would include a Collection Management Plan.

A climate-controlled collection storage facility which meets NPS standards should be located in the future trail office near the City of St. Jude in Montgomery. Interim storage needs can be met at the collection facility at Tuskegee Institute NHS.

Research

The research needs of the trail are numerous and critical. Before interpretive programs and activities can be planned and presented, there needs to be a solid foundation of research upon which to build them. Perhaps the most critical position to fill at this developing site is that of a historian/cultural resources management specialist. Identifying accurate and current research, distilling that information and making it palatable for interpretive needs, establishing and managing an oral history program, conducting research on specific aspects of the march and individual sites, and interfacing with the Alabama Historical Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office, all require the knowledge and skills of a full time specialist.

Research needs for the program would include a Historic Resource Study and Cultural Landscape Report.

Another research need is that of visitor use studies. No information exists concerning trail visitors, who are they, how do they experience the trail, and what are their needs and wishes. Using consistent collecting and recording methodology, accurate and relevant data can be gathered to analyze visitor use trends. The trail can request that a visitor study be conducted by the NPS Cooperative Studies Unit at the University of Idaho or that a Social Science Study be completed by a Cooperative Education Studies Unit (CESU) at a college or university in the region, dependent upon availability of funds.

The library, collection, and research needs can also be met through partnerships to fulfill specific project goals, such as utilizing student interns for museum collections tasks, visiting scholars to conduct research, and alternative funding sources for visitor studies.

OUTREACH

Outreach services are a vital part of a balanced visitor services program. An outreach program can be used to disseminate information, convey basic NPS values, and present interpretive and educational programs beyond trail boundaries. Such off- site programs enable relationships to be strengthened with current stakeholders and fostered with future stewards.

Many resource issues transcend the 54 mile trail and need the support of local, regional, and national communities. Trail staff will work to increase the site's profile as a national historic trail with travel and tourism, as well as educational entities. The trail will develop a collaborative presence for community events and functions that would include written materials and displays.

A pubic information officer position is recommended in the staffing section of this plan. This position would be a key component of targeted outreach efforts and would work with local media, partners, and others to encourage exploration of the trail and its affiliated sites.

PARTNERSHIPS

Implementation of elements of this long-range interpretive plan depend on the continuation and expansion of existing partnerships and the development of new ones. Some of these cooperative efforts have been discussed in other sections of the plan.

Partnerships are successful when all parties contribute and gain from the alliance, when all parties are involved in defining the goals and responsibilities of each participant, and when there is a continuous dialogue among all partners.

For interpretation, these partnerships can include coordinated efforts in providing information, orientation, education, training, research, special event and outreach programs, personal services activities, and media planning, design, and development.

Partnerships should be established with universities, local, state, and federal agencies, and other research/historical organizations to ensure accurate and current research. These would include, but not be limited to, Alabama State, Auburn, Troy State, and Jacksonville State Universities, Trenholm State Technical College, the National Civil Rights Museum, the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, and the National Voting Rights Museum, to name a few. For example, partnership agreements can be established with area colleges and universities to conduct and transcribe oral history interviews.

Trail staff should work with affiliated sites to learn from each other's experiences, stay appraised of current events and activities, and provide assistance as appropriate.

The establishment of educational partnerships with local secondary school and university systems are essential, so that teachers, professors, and curriculum coordinators are involved in the development of materials that meet local, state, and national standards. Other entities, such as the Southern Poverty Law Center and its Teaching Tolerance program, can be consulted and resources shared.

Trail staff will work with local businesses, agencies, and organizations to ensure that the trail's interpretive messages reach diverse audiences. One such partnership is with the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel, which will jointly staff the interpretive centers at Lowndes Interpretive Center, Selma, and Montgomery.

The relationship between the National Park Service, the Alabama Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, the Alabama Historical Commission, and the SEMO Advisory Council and Friends Groups located in Dallas, Lowndes, and Montgomery counties is critical to the trails' ability to effectively tell its stories and provide a comprehensive, quality visitor experience.

A memorandum of agreement has been signed between the National Park Service and the Federal Highway Administration to cooperate and coordinate their efforts in developing this route as a Scenic Byway, All American Road, and National Historic Trail, rather than duplicating each other's efforts. There has been extensive coordination between these two agencies, as well as the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Alabama Historical Commission. These partnerships are critical in many areas concerning trail interpretation, from the ability for visitors to walk the length of the 54 mile trail or at least a portion of it, to the development of future interpretive center facilities in Selma and Montgomery, to experiencing and understanding the diverse stories of all those involved before, during, and after the voting rights march in the struggle for civil rights.

Another partnership is the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) which can provide technical assistance to affiliated sites, such as in the development of trails, as well as interpretive brochures and signage.

Increased communication and partnership with related National Park Service sites that address civil and human rights, such as Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS, Brown v. Board of Education NHS, Little Rock Central High School NHS, Frederick Douglass NHS, Boston African American NHS, Women's Rights NHP, Nez Perce NHP, and Manzanar NHS to name a few, will help SEMO tell a complete and comprehensive story to a wide variety of visitors. It will also allow these sites to cooperatively develop programming about common themes.

Resource and information exchange, as well as coordination and assistance between the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail and its neighboring parks, Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site and Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, is critical to the success of each site. Such exchange and cooperation is also important with the national trail community, consisting of scenic, historic, and recreation trails administered by the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the Forest Service.

The partnership with a cooperating association is important for the development of educational materials. This partnership will help tell the trail story by providing funding to assist the trail in developing interpretive activities and programs, developing and marketing interpretive sales items, and supporting research initiatives. A key element in this partnership is the development of a Scope of Sales Statement, which is a cooperative planning document usually prepared by the association's executive director and the park's cooperating association coordinator (often the chief of interpretation). It is a strategic document critical to the development of a sales line that meets the needs of the public, the association, and the trail. Components of the Scope of Sales Statement include a statement of relationship, trail significance and purpose statements, primary interpretive themes, strategic evaluation of the sales line, and an outline of the selection process and criteria for specific sales items (see Director's Order #32, Cooperating Associations).

Trail staff will need to stay abreast of other planning efforts within the area that could have an impact on the trail or in which SEMO could play a role. This will allow for various entities to cooperate with and support each other.

AFFILIATED SITES

During the course of the planning process, sites were identified where there exists a strong connection between the resources and interpretive stories that SEMO is charged with telling. These sites and their stories are interconnected and complement each other. That initial list was developed during the first workshop and identifies, by interpretive theme, three sites in each county through which the trail passes. This affiliated site list has been further refined by establishing criteria by which interpretive opportunities can be recommended and facilitated.

The criteria are as follows:
1) Proximity to trail

2) Connection to march story

3) Integrity of resource

4) Visitor accessibility, safety, and comfort

5) What is available at site for visitors

The following sites, listed by county, meet this criteria and either currently provide services to visitors, are included in tourism and interpretive literature, or have the greatest potential to do so. Some of these sites are directly located along the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, while others are in close proximity.

Resources can be shared, efforts coordinated, as well as new partnerships established and existing ones strengthened. Interpretive services can be implemented by the appropriate stakeholder group working in partnership with the National Park Service.

Montgomery Affiliated Sites:



1) **Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church and Parsonage**

- Establish partnership
- Share resources - i.e., development of church museum
- Possibly station NPS volunteer at site
- Facilitate getting visitors to the site
- Existing historical markers
- Wayside exhibit panel recommended
- Site could potentially be noted in audio tour, exhibit, publication, or personal services program

2) **Mount Zion AME Church**

- Site could potentially be referenced in audio tour, exhibit, or publication

3) **Oak St., Jefferson Davis St., Day St., Mobile St., Holt St., Dexter Ave. Corridor**

- Area could potentially be referenced in audio tour, exhibit, or publication

4) Liberated Zone, including SNCC Freedom House

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended on subject at St. Jude

-Area could potentially be noted in audio tour, exhibit, publication or personal services program

5) Regal Café/Ben Moore Hotel

- Site could potentially be referenced in audio tour, exhibit, or publication

6) Holt St. Baptist Church and First Baptist Church

- Sites could potentially be referenced in audio tour, exhibit, or publication

7) Bus Station

- Partnership opportunities with Alabama Historical Commission

- Facilitate getting visitors to the site

-Existing historical marker

8) Federal Courthouse

-Site could potentially be referenced in exhibit, audio tour, or publication

9) Centennial Hill and Alabama State University area

-Area could potentially be referenced in exhibit, audio tour, or publication

10)Alabama State Capitol area

- Wayside exhibit panels recommended

-Area could be noted in exhibit, movie, audio tour, publication, or personal services program

11)Campsite

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

-Site could be noted in exhibit, movie, audio tour, publication, or personal services program

Lowndes County Affiliated Sites:



1) **Hayneville**

- Possible commemorative plaque location
- Partnership opportunities
- Possibly reference site in personal services program, exhibit, or publication

2) **SNCC Freedom House Complex**

- Possible commemorative plaque location
- Site could potentially be referenced in publication, exhibit, or personal services program

3) **Mt. Gilliard Baptist Church**

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended
- Develop trail from site to Lowndes Interpretive Center
- Site could potentially be referenced in publication, exhibit, or personal services program

4) **Calhoun School and Ramah Church**

- Partnership opportunities

- County could develop brochure

5) **Mt. Zion Christian School**

- Possible commemorative plaque location

- Site could potentially be referenced in publication or exhibit

6) **Viola Liuzzo Marker**

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

- Marker could potentially be referenced in exhibit, publication, trail -wide audio tour, or personal services program

7) **Campsites**

- Wayside exhibit panels recommended

- Sites noted in exhibit, movie, publication, trail -wide audio tour, and personal services program

Dallas County Affiliated Sites:







1) **Edmund Pettus Bridge**

- Note in movie, exhibit, personal services program, publication, and trail -wide audio tour - however, visitor safety is an issue and needs to be addressed

2) **Point of Confrontation**

- Warrants more than a wayside, such as a memorial of some sort and an inviting gathering area. An easement will be needed with local property owners.

3) **Brown Chapel AME Church**

- Partnership opportunities

- Possibly station an NPS volunteer at the site

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

- Note in exhibit, movie, publication, personal services program, and trail -wide audio tour

4) **First Baptist Church**

-Coordinate media development efforts

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

- Note in exhibit, publication, personal services program, and trail - wide audio tour

5) **MLK, Jr. Street and Carver Housing Complex**

- Wayside exhibit panels recommended

- Note in exhibit, movie, publication, personal services program, and trail -wide audio tour

6) **Dallas County Voters' League Office**

- Possible commemorative plaque location

-Site could potentially be referenced in exhibit, publication, or personal services program

7) **RB Hudson High School**

- Possible commemorative plaque location

-Site could potentially be referenced in exhibit, publication, or personal services program

8) **Good Samaritan Hospital**

- Possible commemorative plaque location

9) **Selma University**

- Possible commemorative plaque location

-Site could possibly be mentioned in exhibits, publication, or personal services program

10)**Amelia Boynton's Home**

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

- Site could potentially be referenced in exhibits, publication, or personal services program

- Partnership opportunities - i.e., conservation

11)Camp Selma

- Potentially reference site in exhibits or personal services program

12)Tabernacle Church

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

- Possibly note in publication or exhibit

13)Fathers of St. Edmonds Church

- Possible commemorative plaque location

- Site could possibly be referenced in publication or exhibit

14)Dallas County Courthouse and Jail

- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

- Potentially note site in exhibit, publication, or personal services program

15)Campsite

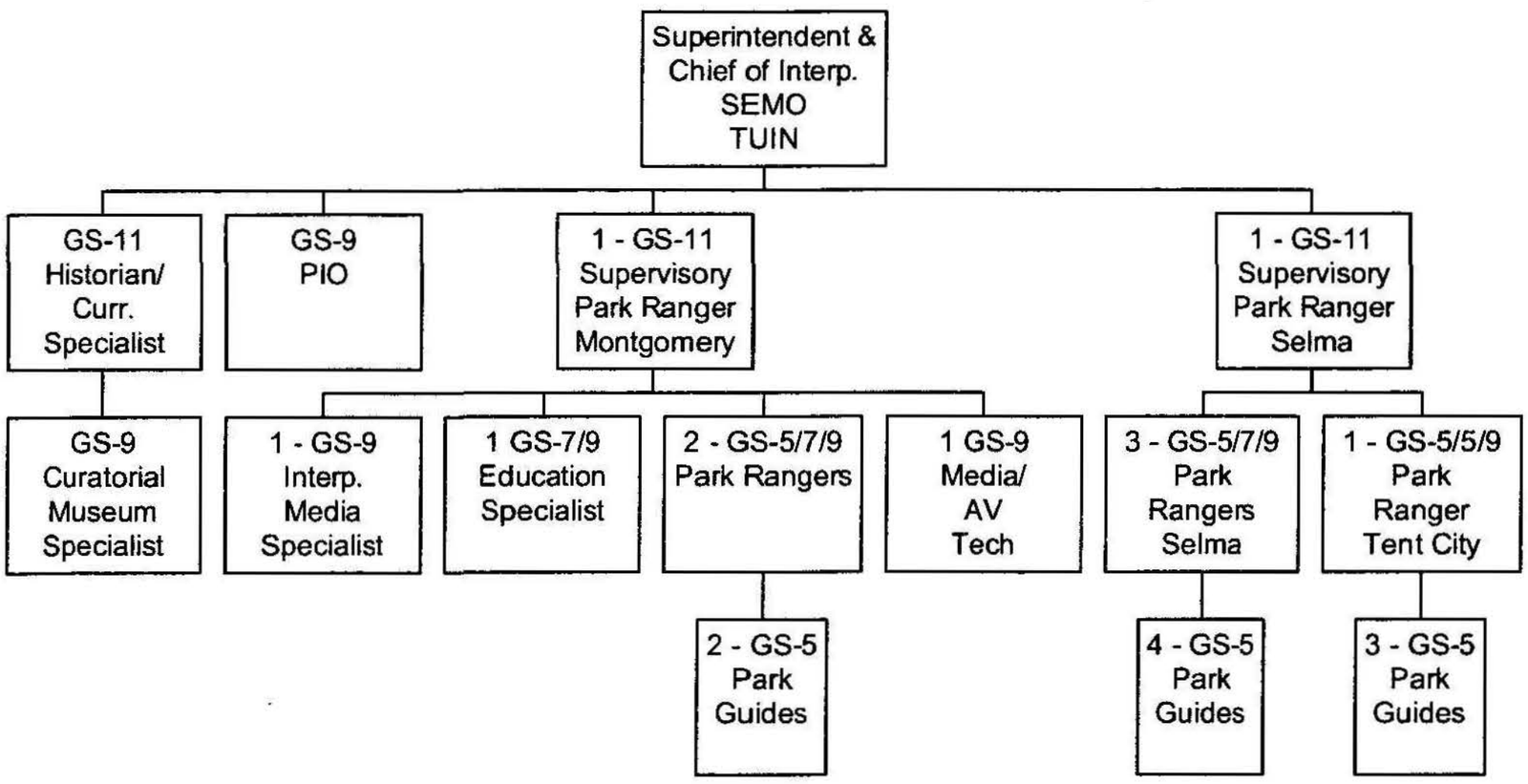
- Wayside exhibit panel recommended

- Note in exhibit, movie, publication, personal services program, or trail-wide audio tour

STAFFING

To successfully implement the proposals in this plan - and meet the NPS objectives of providing for visitor enjoyment and resource protection - the trail will need to hire a full complement of diverse staff.

This organizational structure acknowledges that Selma to Montgomery is no longer under Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site effective April 2003. There is currently a Superintendent and the Chief of Interpretation for the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail and the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site.



Phased Staffing Plan:

FY02
-1 GS-9 Park Ranger @ Montgomery
-1 STEP Student

FYO3
-1 GS-11 Historian/CRM Specialist
-1 GS-9 PIO
-1 GS -5/7 Administrative Support Assistant
-2 STEP Students

FY04
-1 GS-7/9 Education Specialist
-1 GS-7/9 Interpretive Media Specialist

FY05
-1 GS-7/9 Park Ranger @ Lowndes Interpretive Center
-3 GS-3/4/5 Park Guides @ Lowndes Interpretive Center

FY06
-1 GS-9 Curator/Museum Specialist
-1 GS-7/9 Media/AV Technician

FY07
-1 GS-11 Supervisory Park Ranger (Selma/Lowndes Interpretive Center)
-1 GS-11 Supervisory Park Ranger (Montgomery)
-1 GS-7/9 Park Ranger @ Selma

FY08
-2 GS-5/7/9 Park Rangers @ Selma
-1GS-5/7/9 Park Ranger @ Montgomery
-2 GS-3/4/5 Park Guides @ Montgomery
-4 GS-3/4/5 Park Guides @ Selma

INITIAL PRIORITIES

FY02/03

- Design and develop interim site bulletin, utilizing map produced with relevant HFC department input
- Design contract for exhibit research
- Develop trailwide wayside proposal
- Develop trail website
- Coordinate with ALDOT and the Alabama Historical Commission concerning Lowndes Interpretive Center viewshed and interpretive trail
- Design and distribute trail newsletter and rack cards
- Establish and manage oral history program
- Develop research program
- Plan, design, and produce exhibits for Lowndes Interpretive Center , including a movie to be shown at all facilities
- Design and produce unigrid brochure

Interpretive Center Estimated Opening Dates:
2005- Lowndes Interpretive Center
2008 - Montgomery
2008 - Selma

They told us we wouldn't get here. And there were those who said that we would get here only over their dead bodies, but all the world today knows that we are here and that we are standing before the forces of power in the state of Alabama saying, "We ain't goin' let nobody turn us around." ...

We are on the move now...

I know you are asking today, "How long will it take?" I come to say to you this afternoon however difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long, because truth pressed to earth will rise again.

How long? Not long, because no lie can live forever.
How long? Not long, because you still reap what you sow.
How long? Not long. Because the arm of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice.

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
March 25, 1965

PLANNING TEAM & CONSULTANTS

Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail

Catherine Farmer Light, Site Manager, SEMO
Brenda Caldwell, Superintendent, Central Alabama Parks
Tyrone Brandyburg, Chief of Interpretation, Central Alabama Parks
John Bundy, Deputy Superintendent, Central Alabama Parks
Diane May, Secretary, SEMO
Shirley Streeter, Administrative Officer, Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site

Trail Partners

Dr. Frederick D. Reese
Mr. Bob Mants
Dr. Gwendolyn Patton
Ms. Alfedo Acoff, ALDOT
Dallas County Friends Group
Lowndes County Friends Group
Montgomery County Friends Group
Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail Advisory Council
Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)
Alabama Historical Commission
Mr. Joe Wilkerson, Federal Highway Administration
Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel
City of Selma
Town of White Hall
City of Montgomery
City of St. Jude
Brown Chapel AME Church
Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church
Tuskegee Human and Civil Rights Multi-Cultural Center

Harpers Ferry Center

Wendy Janssen, Interpretive Planner
Don Kodak, Associate Manager for Interpretive Planning
Chris Dearing, Exhibit Designer
Terry Lindsay, Wayside Exhibit Planner
Justin Radford, Producer-Director and Project Manager
Brad Bennett, Communications Specialist
Neil Mackay, Senior Exhibit Planner

APPENDIX A: PROPOSED WAYSIDE EXHIBITS

PROPOSED WAYSIDE EXHIBITS

Num	Subject	Location	Style/Base
1	Selma orientation	Selma	Upright
2	Selma Introduction	Selma	Upright
3	First Baptist Church	Selma	Low Profile
4	George Washington Carver Neighborhood	Selma	Low Profile
5	Clark Elementary School	Selma	Low Profile
6	The Brown Chapel AME Church	Selma	Low Profile
7	The Brown Chapel AME Church	Selma	Low Profile
8	The Berlin Wall	Selma	Low Profile
9	Selma orientation (duplicate)	Selma	Upright
10	Selma orientation (duplicate)	Selma	Upright
11	Silver Moon Café	Selma	Low Profile
12	Cecil B. Jackson Public Safety Building	Selma	Low Profile
13	Sullivan Building	Selma	Low Profile
14	Dallas County Courthouse	Selma	Low Profile
15	Tabernacle Baptist Church	Selma	Low Profile
16	Amelia Boynton house	Selma	Low Profile
17	Selma orientation (duplicate)	Selma	Upright
18	Historic Trail Orientation	Selma	Upright
19	Bloody Sunday	Selmont	Low Profile
20	Turnaround Tuesday and March Beginning	Selmont	Low Profile
21	Historic trail orientation (physical- duplicate)	U.S. Highway 80	Upright
22	Historic trail orientation (emotional)	U.S. Highway 80	Upright
23	Campsite 1, David Hall Property	U.S. Highway 80 and Dallas County Route 67	Low Profile
24	Dallas/Lowndes County Line	U.S. Highway 80	Low Profile
25	Mount Gilliard Missionary Baptist Church	U.S. Highway 80	Low Profile

26	Historic trail orientation (physical- duplicate)	Tent City	Upright
27	Tent City orientation	Tent City	Upright
28	Bulletin Case	Tent City	Bulletin Case
29	Historic trail orientation	Tent City	Upright
30	Tent City orientation	Tent City	Upright
31	Bulletin case	Tent city	Bulletin Case
32	March through Lowndes County	Tent City	Low Profile
33	March through Lowndes County	Tent City	Low Profile
34	Tent City	Tent City	Low Profile
35	Tent City	Tent City	Low Profile
36	Tent City	Tent City	Low Profile
37	Campsite 2, Rosie Steel Farm	U.S. Highway 80	Low Profile
38	Campsite 3, Robert Gardner property	U.S. Highway 80	Low Profile
39	Viola Liuzzo murder	U.S. Highway 80	Low Profile
40	Historic Trail orientation (physical- duplicate)	U.S. Highway 80	Upright
41	Historic Trail orientation (emotional- duplicate)	U.S. Highway 80	Upright
42	Historic Trail orientation (physical- duplicate)	Montgomery	Upright
43	Montgomery orientation	Montgomery	Upright
44	Bulletin case	Montgomery	Bulletin Case
45	City of Saint Jude	Montgomery	Upright
46	Liberation Neighborhood	Montgomery	Low Profile
47	Stars for Freedom Rally	Montgomery	Low Profile
48	Freedom Rally Stars	Montgomery	Low Profile
49	Campsite 4, Saint Jude property	Montgomery	Low Profile
50	Going to See the Man	Montgomery	Low Profile
51	Coming Full Circle	Montgomery	Low Profile
52	March conclusion – George Wallace	Montgomery	Low Profile
53	March conclusion – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	Montgomery	Low Profile
54	March conclusion – LBJ	Montgomery	Low Profile
55	Affiliated Site Commemoration	Selma to Montgomery Trail	Custom

APPENDIX B: SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media

National Park Service
Harpers Ferry Center

June 1999

Prepared by
Harpers Ferry Center
Accessibility Task Force

Contents

Statement of Purpose
Audiovisual Programs
Exhibits
Historic Furnishings
Publications
Wayside Exhibits

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This document is a guide for promoting full access to interpretive media to ensure that people with physical and mental disabilities have access to the same information necessary for safe and meaningful visits to National Parks. Just as the needs and abilities of individuals cannot be reduced to simple statements, it is impossible to construct guidelines for interpretive media that can apply to every situation in the National Park System.

These guidelines define a high level of programmatic access which can be met in most situations. They articulate key areas of concern and note generally accepted solutions. Due to the diversity of park resources and the variety of interpretive situations, flexibility and versatility are important.

Each interpretive medium contributes to the total park program. All media have inherent strengths and weaknesses, and it is our intent to capitalize on their strengths and provide alternatives where they are deficient. It should also be understood that any interpretive medium is just one component of the overall park experience. In some instances, especially with regard to learning disabilities, personal services, that is one-on-one interaction, may be the most appropriate and versatile interpretive approach.

In the final analysis, interpretive design is subjective, and dependent on aesthetic considerations as well as the particular characteristics and resources available for a specific program. Success or failure should be evaluated by examining all interpretive offerings of a park. Due to the unique characteristics of each situation, parks should be evaluated on a case by case basis. Nonetheless, the goal is to fully comply with NPS policy:

"...To provide the highest level of accessibility possible and feasible for persons with visual, hearing, mobility, and mental impairments, consistent with the obligation to conserve park resources and preserve the quality of the park experience for everyone."

NPS Special Directive 83-3, Accessibility for Disabled Persons

Audiovisual Programs

Audiovisual programs include video programs, and audio and interactive programs. As a matter of policy, all audiovisual programs produced by the Harpers Ferry Center will include some method of captioning. The Approach used will vary according to the conditions of the installation area and the media format used, and will be selected in consultation with the parks and regions.

The captioning method will be identified as early as possible in the planning process and will be presented in an integrated setting where possible. To the extent possible, visitors will be offered a choice in viewing captioned or uncaptioned versions, but in situations where a choice is not possible or feasible, a captioned version of all programs will be made available. Park management will decide on the most appropriate operational approach for the particular site.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments

1. The theater, auditorium, or viewing area should be accessible and free of architectural barriers, or alternative accommodations will be provided. UFAS 4.1.
2. Wheelchair locations will be provided according to ratios outlined in UFAS 4.1.2(18a).
3. Viewing heights and angles will be favorable for those in designated wheelchair locations.
4. In designing video or interactive components, control mechanisms will be placed in accessible location, usually between 9" and 48" from the ground and no more than 24" deep.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments

Simultaneous audio description will be considered for installations where the equipment can be properly installed and maintained.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments

1. All audiovisual programs will be produced with appropriate captions.
2. Copies of scripts will be provided to the parks as a standard procedure.
3. Audio amplification and listening systems will be provided in accordance with UFAS 4.1.2(18b).

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments

1. Unnecessarily complex and confusing concepts will be avoided.
2. Graphic elements will be chosen to communicate without reliance on the verbal component.

3. Narration will be concise and free of unnecessary jargon and technical information.

Exhibits

Numerous factors affect the design of exhibits, reflecting the unique circumstances of the specific space and the nature of the materials to be interpreted. It is clear that thoughtful, sensitive design can go a long way in producing exhibits that can be enjoyed by a broad range of people. Yet, due to the diversity of situations encountered, it is impossible to articulate guidelines that can be applied universally.

In some situations, the exhibit designer has little or no control over the space. Often exhibits are placed in areas ill suited for that purpose, they may incorporate large or unyielding specimens, may incorporate sensitive artifacts which require special environmental controls, and room decor or architectural features may dictate certain solutions. All in all, exhibit design is an art which defies simple description. However, one central concern is to communicate the message to the largest audience possible. Every reasonable effort will be made to eliminate any factors limiting communication through physical modification or by providing an alternate means of communication.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments

Note: The **Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)** is the standard followed by the National Park Service and is therefore the basis for the accessibility standards for exhibits, where applicable.

1. Height/position of labels: Body copy on vertical exhibit walls should be placed at between **36"** and **60"** from the floor.

2. Artifact Cases:

   a. Maximum height of floor of artifact case display area shall be no higher than **30"** from the floor of the room. This includes vitrines that are recessed into an exhibit wall.

   b. Artifact labels should be placed so as to be visible to a person within a **43"** to **51"** eye level. This includes mounting labels within the case at an angle to maximize its visibility to all viewers.

3. Touchable Exhibits: Touchable exhibits positioned horizontally should be placed no higher than **30"** from the floor. Also, if the exhibit is approachable only on one side, it should be no deeper than **31"**.

4. Railings/barriers: Railings around any horizontal model or exhibit element shall have a maximum height of **36"** from the floor.

5. Information desks: Information desks and sales counters shall

include a section made to accommodate both a visitor in a wheelchair and an employee in a wheelchair working on the other side. A section of the desk/counter shall have the following dimensions:

a. Height from the floor to the top: **28** to **34** inches. (ADAAG 4.32.4)

b. Minimum knee clearance space: **27" high, 30" wide** and **19" deep** of clearance underneath the desk is the minimum space required under ADAAG 4.32.3, but a space **30" high, 36" wide** and **24" deep** is recommended.

c. Width of top surface of section: at least **36 inches**. Additional space must be provided for any equipment such as a cash register.

d. Area underneath desk: Since both sides of the desk may have to accommodate a wheelchair, this area should be open all the way through to the other side. In addition, there should be no sharp or abrasive surfaces underneath the desk. The floor space behind the counter shall be free of obstructions.

6. Circulation Space:

a. Passageways through exhibits shall be at least **36" wide.**

b. If an exhibit passageway reaches a dead-end, an area **60" by 78"** should be provided at the end for turning around.

c. Objects projecting from walls with their leading edges between **27"** and **80"** above the floor shall protrude no more than **4"** in passageways or aisles. Objects projecting from walls with their leading edges at or below **27"** above the floor can protrude any amount.

d. Freestanding objects mounted on posts or pylons may overhang a maximum of **12"** from **27"** to **80"** above the floor. (ADAAG 4.4.1)

e. Protruding objects shall not reduce the clear width of an accessible route to less than the minimum required amount. (ADAAG 4.4.1)

f. Passageways or other circulation spaces shall have a minimum clear head room of **80"**. For example, signage hanging from the ceiling must have at least **80"** from the floor to the bottom edge of the sign. (ADAAG 4.4.2)

7. Floors:

a. Floors and ramps shall be stable, level, firm and slip-resistant.

b. Changes in level between **1/4"** and **1/2"** shall be beveled with a slope no greater than **1:2.** Changes in level greater than **1/2"** shall be accomplished by means of a ramp that complies with ADAAG 4.7 or 4.8. (ADAAG 4.5.2)

c. Carpet in exhibit areas shall comply with ADAAG 4.5.3 for pile height, texture, pad thickness, and trim.

8. Seating - Interactive Stations/Work Areas: The minimum knee space underneath a work desk is **27" high, 30" wide** and **19" deep**, with a clear floor space of at least **30" by 30"** in front. The top of the desk or work surface shall be between **28"** and **34"** from the floor. (ADAAG 4.32, Fig.45)

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments

1. Tactile models and other touchable exhibit items should be used whenever possible. Examples of touchable exhibit elements include relief maps, scale models, raised images of simple graphics, reproduction objects, and replaceable objects (such as natural history or geological specimens, cultural history items, etc.).

2. Typography - Readability of exhibit labels by visitors with various degrees of visual impairment shall be maximized by using the following guidelines:

   a. Type size - **No** type in the exhibit shall be smaller than **24 point.**

   b. Typeface - The most readable typefaces should be used whenever possible, particularly for body copy. They are: Times Roman, Palatino, Century, Helvetica and Universe.

   c. Styles, Spacing - Text set in both caps and lower case is easier to read than all caps. Choose letter spacing and word spacing for maximum readability. Avoid too much italic type.

   d. Line Length - Limit the line length for body copy to no more than **45 to 50 characters per line.**

   e. Amount of Text - Each unit of body copy should have a maximum of **45-60 words.**

   f. Margins - Flush left, ragged right margins are easiest to read.

3. Color:

   a. Type/Background Contrast - Percentage of contrast between the type and the background should be a **minimum of 70% .**

   b. Red/Green - Do not use red on green or green on red as the type/background color combination.

   c. Do not place body copy on top of graphic images that impair readability.

4. Samples: During the design process, it is recommended that samples be made for review of all size, typeface and color combinations for

labels in that exhibit.

5. Exhibit Lighting:

   a. All labels shall receive sufficient, even light for good readability. Exhibit text in areas where light levels have been reduced for conservation purposes should have a minimum of 10 footcandles of illumination.

   b. Harsh reflections and glare should be avoided.

   c. The lighting system shall be flexible enough to allow adjustments on-site.

   d. Transitions between the floor and walls, columns or other structures should be made clearly visible. Finishes for vertical surfaces should contrast clearly with the floor finish. Floor circulation routes should have a minimum of 10 footcandles of illumination.

6. Signage: When permanent building signage is required as a part of an exhibit project, the ADAAG guidelines shall be consulted. Signs, which designate permanent rooms and spaces, shall comply with ADAAG 4.30.1, 4.30.4, 4.30.5, and 4.30.6. Other signs, which provide direction to or information about functional spaces of the building, shall comply with ADAAG 4.30.1, 4.30.2, 4.30.3, and 4.30.5. Note: When the International Symbol of Accessibility (wheelchair symbol) is used, **the word "Handicapped" shall not be used** beneath the symbol. Instead, use the word "Accessible".

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments

1. Information presented via audio formats will be duplicated in a visual medium, such as in the exhibit label copy or by captioning. All video programs incorporated into the exhibit, which contain audio, shall be open captioned.

2. Amplification systems and volume controls should be incorporated with audio equipment used individually by the visitor, such as audio handsets.

3. Information desks shall allow for Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD) equipment.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments

1. The exhibits will present the main interpretive themes on a variety of levels of complexity, so people with varying abilities and interests can understand them.

2. The exhibits should avoid unnecessarily complex and confusing topics, technical terms, and unfamiliar expressions. Pronunciation aids should be provided where appropriate.

3. Graphic elements shall be used to communicate non -verbally.
4. The exhibits shall be a multi-sensory experience. Techniques to maximize the number of senses used in the exhibits should be encouraged.
5. Exhibit design shall use color and other creative approaches to facilitate comprehension of maps by visitors with directional impairments.

Historic Furnishings

Historically refurnished rooms offer the public a unique interpretive experience by placing visitors within historic spaces. Surrounded by historic artifacts visitors can feel the spaces "come alive" and relate more directly to the historic events or personalities commemorated by the park.

Accessibility is problematical in many NPS furnished sites because of the very nature of historic architecture. Buildings were erected with a functional point of view that is many times at odds with our modern views of accessibility.

The approach used to convey the experience of historically furnished spaces will vary from site to site. The goals, however, will remain the same, to give the public as rich an interpretive experience as possible given the nature of the structure.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments

1. The exhibit space should be free of architectural barriers or a method of alternate accommodation should be provided, such as slide programs, videotaped tours, visual aids, dioramas, etc.
2. All pathways, aisles, and clearances shall (when possible) meet standards set forth in UFAS 4.3 to provide adequate clearance for wheelchair routes.
3. Ramps shall be as gradual as possible and not exceed a 1" rise in 12" run, and conform to UFAS 4.8.
4. Railings and room barriers will be constructed in such a way as to provide unobstructed viewing by persons in wheelchairs.
5. In the planning and design process, furnishing inaccessible areas, such as upper floors of historic buildings, will be discouraged unless essential for interpretation.
6. Lighting will be designed to reduce glare or reflections when viewed from a wheelchair.
7. Alternative methods of interpretation, such as audiovisual programs, audio description, photo albums, and personal services will be used

in areas which present difficulty for visitors with physical impairments.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments

1. Exhibit typefaces will be selected for readability and legibility, and conform to good industry practice.
2. Audio description will be used to describe furnished rooms, where appropriate.
3. Windows will be treated with film to provide balanced light levels and minimize glare.
4. Where appropriate, visitor- controlled rheostat-type lighting will be provided to augment general room lighting.
5. Where appropriate and when proper clearance has been approved, surplus artifacts or reproductions will be utilized as "hands-on" tactile interpretive devices.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments

1. Information about room interiors will be presented in a visual medium such as exhibit copy, text, pamphlets, etc.
2. Captions will be provided for all AV programs relating to historic furnishings.

Guidelines Affecting the Visitors with Learning Impairments

1. Where appropriate, hands-on participatory elements geared to the level of visitor capabilities will be used.
2. Living history activities and demonstrations, which utilize the physical space as a method of providing multi-sensory experiences, will be encouraged.

Publications

A variety of publications are offered to visitors, ranging from park folders, which provide an overview and orientation to a park, to more comprehensive handbooks. Each park folder should give a brief description of services available to visitors with disabilities, list significant barriers, and note the existence of TDD phone numbers, if available.

In addition, informal site bulletins are often produced to provide more specialized information about a specific site or topic. It is recommended that each park produce an easily updatable "Accessibility Site Bulletin" which could include detailed information about the specific programs, services, and opportunities available for visitors with disabilities and to describe barriers which are present in the park. A template for this site bulletin will be on the Division of Publications website for

parks to create with ease, a consistent look throughout the park service. These bulletins should be in large type, 16 points minimum and follow the large-print criteria below.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments

1. Park folders, site bulletins, and sales literature will be distributed from accessible locations and heights.
2. Park folders and Accessibility Site Bulletins should endeavor to carry information on the accessibility of buildings, trails, and programs by visitors with disabilities.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments

1. Publications for the general public:

a. Text

(1) Size: the largest type size appropriate for the format.

(preferred main body of text should be 10pt)

(2) Leading should be at least 20% greater than the font size used.

(3) Proportional letterspacing

(4) Main body of text set in caps and lower case.

(5) Margins are flush left and ragged right

(6) Little or no hyphenation is used at ends of lines.

(7) Ink coverage is dense

(8) Underlining does not connect with the letters being underlined.

(9) Contrast of typeface and illustrations to background is high (70% contrast is recommended)

(10) Photographs have a wide range of gray scale variation.

(11) Line drawings or floor plans are clear and bold, with limited detail and minimum 8 pt type.

(12) No extreme extended or compressed typefaces are used for main text.

(13) Reversal type should be minimum of 11 point medium or bold sans-serif type.

b. The paper:

(1) Surface preferred is a matte finish. Dull-coated stock is acceptable.

(2) Has sufficient weight to avoid "show-through" on pages

printed on both sides.

2. Large-print version publications:

a. Text

(1) Size: minimum16 point type.

(2) Leading is 16 on 20pt.

(3) Proportional letterspacing

(4) Main body of text set in caps and lower case.

(5) Margins are flush left and ragged right.

(6) Little or no hyphenation is used at ends of lines.

(7) Ink coverage is dense.

(8) Underlining does not connect with the letters being underlined.

(9) Contrast of typeface and illustrations to background is high (70% contrast is recommended)

(10) Photographs have a wide range of gray scale variation.

(11) Line drawings or floor plans are clear and bold, with limited detail and minimum14 pt type.

(12) No extreme extended or compressed typefaces are used for main text.

(13) Sans-serif or simple-serif typeface

(14) No oblique or italic typefaces

(15) Maximum of 50 characters (average) per line.

(16) No type is printed over other designs.

(17) Document has a flexible binding, preferably one that allows the publication to lie flat.

(18) Gutter margins are a minimum of 22mm; outside margin smaller but not less than 13mm.

b. Paper:

(1) Surface is off- white or natural with matte finish.

(2) Has sufficient weight to avoid "show- through" on pages printed on both sides.

3. Maps:

a. The less clutter the map, the more visitors that can use it.

b. The ultimate is one map that is large-print and tactile.

c. Raised line/tactile maps are something that could be developed in future, using our present digital files and a thermaform machine. Lines are distinguished by lineweight, color and height. Areas are distinguished by color, height, and texture.

d. The digital maps are on an accessible web site.

e. Same paper guides as above.

f. Contrast of typeface background is high. (70% contrast is recommended)

g. Proportional letterspacing

h. Labels set in caps and lower case

i. Map notes are flush left and ragged right.

j. Little or no hyphenation is used as ends of lines.

k. No extreme extended or compressed typefaces are used for main text.

l. Sans-serif or simple-serif typeface.

4. The text contained in the park folder should also be available on audiocassette, CD and accessible web site. Handbooks, accessibility guides, and other publications should be similarly recorded where possible.

5. The official park publication is available in a word processing format. This could be translated into Braille as needed.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments

Park site bulletins will note the availability of such special services as sign language interpretation and captioned programs.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments

1. The park site bulletin should list any special services available to these visitors.

2. Publications:

   a. Use language that appropriately describes persons with disabilities.

   b. Topics will be specific and of general interest. Unnecessary complexity will be avoided.

   c. Whenever possible, easy to understand graphics will be used to convey ideas, rather than text alone.

   d. Unfamiliar expressions, technical terms, and jargon will be avoided. Pronunciation aids and definitions will be provided where

needed.

e. Text will be concise and free of long paragraphs and wordy language.

Wayside Exhibits

Wayside exhibits, which include outdoor interpretive exhibits and signs, orientation shelter exhibits, trailhead exhibits, and bulletin boards, offer special advantages to visitors with disabilities. The liberal use of photographs, artwork, diagrams, and maps, combined with highly readable type, make wayside exhibits an excellent medium for visitors with hearing and learning impairments. For visitors with sight impairments, waysides offer large type and high legibility.

Although a limited number of NPS wayside exhibits will always be inaccessible to visitors with mobility impairments, the great majority are placed at accessible pullouts, viewpoints, parking areas, and trailheads.

The NPS accessibility guidelines for wayside exhibits help insure a standard of quality that will be appreciated by all visitors. Nearly everyone benefits from high quality graphics, readable type, comfortable base designs, accessible locations, hard-surfaced exhibit pads, and well-landscaped exhibit sites.

While waysides are valuable on-site "interpreters," it should be remembered that the park resources themselves are the primary things visitors come to experience. Good waysides focus attention on the features they interpret, and not on themselves. A wayside exhibit is only one of the many interpretive tools which visitors can use to enhance their appreciation of a park.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments

1. Wayside exhibits will be installed at accessible locations whenever possible.
2. Wayside exhibits will be installed at heights and angles favorable for viewing by most visitors including those in wheelchairs. For standard NPS low-profile units the recommended height is 30 inches from the bottom edge of the exhibit panel to the finished grade; for vertical exhibits the height of 6-28 inches.
3. Trailhead exhibits will include information on trail conditions which affect accessibility.
4. Wayside exhibit sites will have level, hard surfaced exhibit pads.
5. Exhibit sites will offer clear, unrestricted views of park features described in exhibits.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments

1. Exhibit type will be as legible and readable as possible.
2. Panel colors will be selected to reduce eyestrain and glare, and to provide excellent readability under field conditions. White should not be used as a background color.
3. Selected wayside exhibits may incorporate audio stations or tactile elements such as models, texture blocks, and relief maps.
4. For all major features interpreted by wayside exhibits, the park should offer non-visual interpretation covering the same subject matter. Examples include cassette tape tours, radio messages, and ranger talks.
5. Appropriate tactile cues should be provided to help visually impaired visitors locate exhibits.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments

1. Wayside exhibits will communicate visually, and will rely heavily on graphics to interpret park resources.
2. Essential information included in audio station messages will be duplicated in written form, either as part of the exhibit text or with printed material.

Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments

1. Topics for wayside exhibits will be specific and of general interest. Unnecessary complexity will be avoided.
2. Whenever possible, easy to understand graphics will be used to convey ideas, rather than text alone.
3. Unfamiliar expressions, technical terms, and jargon will be avoided. Pronunciation aids and definitions will be provided where needed.
4. Text will be concise and free of long paragraphs and wordy language.

NOTES

1. National Register of Historic Places, *We Shall Overcome, Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement* (website 2001), Introduction.
2. National Park Service, *Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail Alternatives Summary* (Comprehensive Management Plan, 1999), 3.
3. National Park Service, *Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail Alternatives Summary* (Comprehensive Management Plan, 1999), 3.
4. National Park Service, *Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail Alternatives Summary* (Comprehensive Management Plan, 1999), 16.
5. National Park Service, *Findings and Recommendations, Education Initiative Symposium* (1997), Prologue, V.
6. National Park System Advisory Board, *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century* (2001), 10, 13- 14.

REFERENCES

1. Hayworth, Meyer, and Boleyn, Inc., *Master Plan for Selma to Montgomery Scenic Byway/All-American Road/Historic Trail*, July 1999.

2. National Park Service, *Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail Alternatives Summary*, Comprehensive Management Plan, Fall 1999.

3. National Park Service, *Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail Strategic Plan.*

4. National Register of Historic Places, *We Shall Overcome,Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement,* Website 2001.

5. National Park Service, *Management Policies,* 2001.