



Climate Change Hazards Summary Report for Facility Investment Planning

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site January 2021

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Introduction

Parks are required to complete a park project narrative template for each proposed Great American Outdoors Act Facility Investment Plan (GFIP) project for Legacy Restoration Funding in fiscal years 2023-2025. Information provided in this report is intended to help parks consider climate change related hazards when addressing Question 16 of the narrative template.

Specifically: What risks or hazards (current and projected, e.g. effects of climate change) are likely to affect this project? If applicable, what adaptation strategies and/or resiliency measures have been identified for scenarios that pose high risks to project assets?

Step 1: Review summary information for known or potential hazards identified for Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

- Review the list of potential hazards below and decide whether or not they apply to your specific GFIP project. NPS Climate Change Response Program (CCRP) staff attempted to identify potential hazards for the park; however, park staff and project planners have more information about hazards that are likely to be applicable to a specific project.
- The hazards below were selected from a longer list included in Appendix 1, which also indicates CCRP's 'best professional judgement' about the relevance of the hazard for this park. Note both lists serve as a "coarse filter" screening tool to help identify potential climate-related hazards for facility and asset planning.

Hotter temperatures

Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities have increased temperatures globally (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change et al. 2013), across the U.S. (U.S. Global Change Research Program et al. 2017), and in U.S. national parks (Gonzalez et al. 2018). For the area within the boundaries of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, annual average temperature increased at the statistically significant rate of $0.6 \pm 0.1^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($1.1 \pm 0.2^{\circ}\text{F.}$) per century from 1895 to 2017 (Gonzalez et al. 2018). Under the highest greenhouse gas emissions scenario, climate models project additional heating of the area within park boundaries of $4.1 \pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($7.4 \pm 1.8^{\circ}\text{F.}$) by 2100. The temperature increase could be kept to $1.6 \pm 0.7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($2.9 \pm 1.3^{\circ}\text{F.}$) under a scenario of reduced emissions (Gonzalez et al. 2018). Under the highest emissions scenario, models project an increase of 10 to 20 more days per year with a maximum temperature $>32^{\circ}\text{C}$ (90°F.) and an increase of $2\text{--}3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($4\text{--}6^{\circ}\text{F.}$) in the hottest temperature of the year, from 1990 to 2050 (Easterling et al. 2017). Extreme temperatures can increase weathering and stress on infrastructure, staff, and people.

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Drought

Drought is an extended period of precipitation, surface water, or soil moisture below a long-term average. Drought can affect water supply and water and wastewater systems, water quality (Mosley 2015), soil stability (Fernandes et al. 2015), and wildfire risk (Abatzoglou and Williams 2016). While the Columbia River Basin has experienced some drought years in the past century (Xiao et al. 2016), published analyses have not found long-term historical increases in drought. Under the highest emissions scenario, climate change increases drought risks in Washington and Oregon, with increases in drought risk by 2100 to the 5% driest historical drought level (Cook et al. 2015).

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Increased wildfire

Wildfire is a natural part of many forest, woodland, and grassland ecosystems. Excessive fire, however, can damage ecosystems, kill people, and damage infrastructure. Climate change is intensifying the heat that drives wildfire (Jolly et al. 2015) and altering the distribution and density of vegetation that comprises the fuel for wildfires (Gonzalez et al. 2010). These effects combine with the unnatural buildup of coarse woody debris and understory trees from decades of suppression of all fires, even natural ones (Agee and Skinner 2005). The effects of climate change on wildfire vary across landscapes. For areas where projected climate change increases fire risk, infrastructure located under or near tree canopies or dense grasslands are vulnerable to burning and destruction.

In the western U.S., analyses of causal factors have found that human-caused climate change has doubled the area burned by wildfire since 1984 above natural levels, mainly through drying of vegetation (Abatzoglou and Williams 2016). Under the highest greenhouse gas emissions scenario, projected climate change could increase the frequency of large fires up to three times in the Cascades by 2050 (Barbero et al. 2015). Since Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is surrounded by urban areas, fire risk is lower.

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Changing rainfall and snowfall

For the area within the boundaries of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, total annual precipitation changed at the non-statistically significant rate of $4\% \pm 47\%$ per century from 1895 to 2017 (Gonzalez et al. 2018). Under the highest emissions scenario, the average of climate model projections is a total annual precipitation increase of $4 \pm 6\%$ by 2100, though three-quarters of the models project increases and one-quarter project decreases (Gonzalez et al. 2018). Changing precipitation and humidity conditions can affect flooding, mold growth, wood decay, and fire risk.

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Increased extreme precipitation

Climate change has contributed to a 9% increase in 100-year storms (a day with more precipitation than any other day, on average, in 100 years) for the Pacific Northwest as a whole from 1958 to 2016 (Easterling et al. 2017). Under the highest emissions scenario, models project a doubling of 5-year storms (a two-day period with more precipitation than any other two-day period in five years) (Easterling et al. 2017). Extreme storms can cause flooding, and damage to water and wastewater systems, drainage systems, roads, buildings, and other infrastructure, and cause erosion.

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Flooding

No published analyses have found a historical change in flood frequency in the Pacific Northwest. For the future, changes in flood risk along the Columbia River in the Portland area will be influenced by the amount of impervious surface in the urban area, upstream management of dams and reservoirs, and the amount of precipitation and intensity of storms. Continued climate change under high emissions could increase 100-year runoff (a day with more runoff than any other day, on average, in 100 years) in the Portland area 5-10% by 2055 (Najafi and Moradkhani 2015) and Columbia River flow in 100-year floods 5-10% by 2100 (Mondal and Mujumdar 2016). One model analysis indicates that a 10% increase in river runoff could cause a 0.8 m (30 in.) increase in flood water level at Vancouver, Washington (Helaire et al. 2020). Floods threats to infrastructure include inundation, erosion, structural collapse from force of floodwaters, and damage to electrical systems. Post-flooding effects include rot, fungus, insects, mold, and mildew and physical deterioration of building materials.

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Insect Pests

Warmer and moister conditions, which may increase under climate change, tend to favor numerous insect pests, including termites, ants, and hornets (Sims and Appel 2017). Continued climate change under low to high emissions could increase the number of invasive termite species in the Pacific Northwest (Buczkowski and Bertelsmeier 2017). Pests can directly infest buildings and other infrastructure and indirectly affect infrastructure by increasing risks of tree mortality and treefall.

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Invasive species

Climate change can favor invasive alien plant species in temperate zone ecosystems due to increased warmth, humidity, vegetation disturbances, and atmospheric carbon dioxide (Hellmann et al. 2008, Davidson et al. 2011, Liu et al. 2017). The Portland area is a zone of high risk of invasive alien plant and animal species under climate change (Early et al. 2016). Continued climate change under high emissions increases the risks of invasion of the Columbia River by the zebra mussel (Petsch et al. 2020), which can severely damage aquatic ecosystems and infrastructure. Invasive species such as rodents can damage buildings and electrical and water systems (Vissicelli 2018).

Park staff assessment – relevant to GFIP Project:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

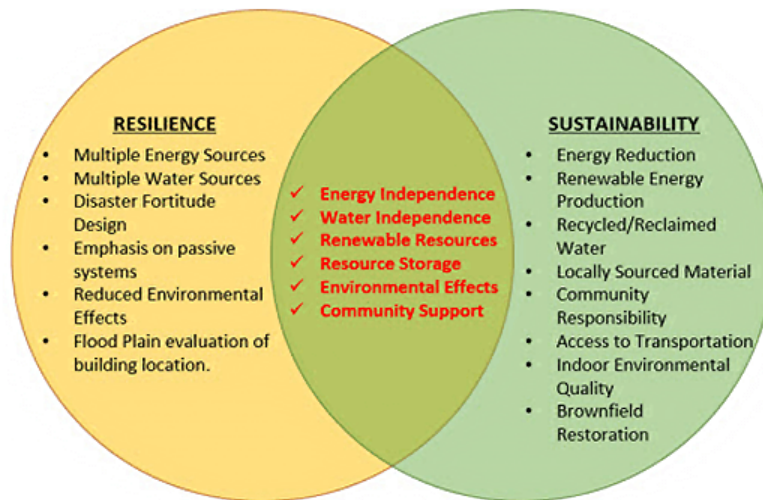
Step 2: Consider adaptation and resiliency strategies

- Review definitions of resiliency and adaptation strategies.
- Identify adaptation strategies that will help park resources respond to the hazards identified in Step 1.

Question 16 requires a screening for climate hazards followed by a review of adaptation and resiliency strategies that would be put in place to respond to these hazards. For the purposes of this report and investment planning, resilience is a property of a system or asset and generally refers to the ability of the system or asset to maintain its intended purpose following a temporary disturbance.

Adaptation strategies, in the context of built infrastructure, refers to the intentional management decision to identify, prepare for, and respond to observed or expected sustained changes in hazards, including climate change, to adjust to a sustained change in conditions.

It is important to note that resilient park operations can be supported through the use of green infrastructure such as sustainable landscaping, as well as sustainable energy, water, and building envelope solutions. The figure below illustrates this relationship.



Lists of adaptation strategies for different types of infrastructure projects in response to different hazards can be found here: [Incorporating Climate Change Adaptation in Infrastructure Planning and Design](#) (see Chapter 4, Tables 25-34). If used, these adaptation strategies will need to be modified for proposed park projects.

Buildings and assets within national parks may include cultural resources (e.g., historic and pre-historic buildings and structures). The adaptation and resiliency options for cultural resources often overlap with those defined for facilities; however, NPS has detailed specific strategies when dealing with cultural resources and climate change in national parks. ([Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy](#)). “Climate change poses an especially acute problem for managing cultural resources because they are unique and irreplaceable — once lost, they are lost forever.” ([NPS Policy Memorandum 14-02](#)).

Step 3: Develop an answer to Question 16 for your specific project and location, as well as strategies to address each hazard

- An example response to Question 16 is provided below.
- You will need to identify the general type of project and modify the text below based on the hazards identified in Step 1 and the adaptation strategies identified in Step 2 for your park and project. The park response should be as project-specific as possible.

Question 16: What risks or hazards (current and projected, e.g. effects of climate change) are likely to affect this project? If applicable, what adaptation strategies and/or resiliency measures have been identified for scenarios that pose high risks to project assets?

Several climate change hazards may affect a (new building, historic building restoration, road repair, water system, other) project at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, including hotter temperatures,

more frequent storms, Columbia River flooding, increased insect pests, and increased invasive alien species, including the zebra mussel. Possible adaptation and resiliency strategies include:

- Changes in building design or building systems to maintain appropriate temperatures and humidity without increasing energy use, which would increase greenhouse gas emissions and exacerbate climate change. Energy conservation and renewable energy systems to prevent any increase in fossil fuel energy use.
- Strengthening structures to prevent damage from extreme storms or treefall.
- Natural shoreline features along the Columbia River to handle potential flooding.
- Drainage systems and culverts that could handle greater water flows.
- Water conservation measures to reduce water use during droughts.
- Clearing any flammable vegetation or other material away from buildings.
- Changes in building design or post-flooding dehumidification systems, coordinating with the NPS Historic Architecture, Conservation and Engineering Center or Historic Preservation Training Center and avoiding any increase in energy use, which would increase greenhouse gas emissions and exacerbate climate change.
- Early detection and removal of termites or other pests or invasive species.
- Relocation of any infrastructure from an area where a hazard cannot be avoided.

Step 4: Seek additional assistance if desired

- Additional resources for answering question 16 and related questions can be found in:
 - Appendix 1 below, which includes a full hazards checklist, providing additional links for supporting information related to each hazard.
 - Appendix 2 below, which provides a map to visualize how climate is changing for the park.
 - The [GFIP Guidance and Logistics](#) folder under the [Resources to Assess Risks and Hazards tab](#) includes:
 - An Excel workbook labeled [T75 Parks GFIP NRSS Supporting Materials](#) that provides links to information for natural resources to be considered during project design and construction.
 - A [FAQs – Assessing Risks and Hazards](#) document that provides detailed guidance for answering Question 16.
 - A [Natural Hazard Assessment Webinar](#) recording that provides key information, definitions, and guidance for understanding natural hazards and related resources.
- The NPS Climate Change Response Program (CCRP) and Sustainable Operations and Maintenance Branch (SOMB) are also available for assistance in evaluation of climate change hazards and resiliency strategies as they relate to specific projects. Questions can be sent to the NPS [GFIP Hazards and Risk Assistance email account](#) and a member of that team will reply with support.

Appendix 1: The Climate-Related Hazard Checklist

This appendix provides an initial evaluation of climate hazards for Fort Vancouver National Historic Site according to the hazard ratings identified below. The information used to identify hazards in the checklist is mostly from regional assessments. Park and project specific information was generally not available when assessing these hazards. NPS Climate Change Response Program (CCRP) staff made an initial attempt to identify potential hazards for the park broadly (see 'Best Professional Judgement' column); however, park staff and project planners have more information about hazards that are likely to be applicable to a specific project.

Explanation of Hazard Ratings

Known hazard: Conditions that cause the hazard are well documented in the area where the park occurs. If applicable to the project site, these hazards should always be addressed in the project plan.

Potential hazard: Conditions that cause or underlie the hazard are known to occur nearby or are likely to occur based on studies with conditions similar to the park. If applicable to the project site, these hazards should be considered for inclusion in the project plan.

Not applicable: No evidence *was identified* showing this hazard is relevant to the park. Note this is a coarse filter evaluation; local knowledge of a hazard(s) should be used, when available.

Table 1. Climate-related Hazards Checklist

Potential Climate Hazard	Best Professional Judgment	Examples of risk or secondary hazard	Sources of General Non-site specific Data	Sources for Site Specific Data
Hotter average days and more very hot days	Known Hazard ☒ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☐	• Road surface degradation • Lack of water due to increased water for irrigation • Increased humidity • Danger to staff	• National Climate Assessment	• National Climatic Data Center • DAYMet gridded climate data • National park historical and projected climate change

Potential Climate Hazard	Best Professional Judgment	Examples of risk or secondary hazard	Sources of General Non-site specific Data	Sources for Site Specific Data
Increased drought frequency, intensity, magnitude, and duration	Known Hazard ☒ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☐	• Limited water supply for cooling, landscaping, structural fire suppression, other equipment • Increased competition for available water and water rights conflicts • Crack/heave damage in drier soils • Increased vulnerability to wildfire (below)	• Drought Monitor • National Integrated Drought Information Center • National Climate Assessment	• Drought Monitor • National Integrated Drought Information Center
Increased wildfire frequency, intensity, magnitude, and duration	Known Hazard ☒ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☐	• Damage to facilities and contents • Smoke damage • Air quality dangerous to staff and visitors • Increased runoff • Increased erosion • Damage to water treatment plants	• Barbero et al. 2015 International Journal of Wildland Fire	• NIFC • International Wildland-Urban Interface Code
Altered precipitation patterns and changing humidity	Known Hazard ☒ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☐	• Local flooding • Mold growth • Wood decay • Drought • Fire • Groundwater change	• National Climate Assessment	• National Climatic Data Center • DAYMet gridded climate data • National Park historical and projected climate change

Potential Climate Hazard	Best Professional Judgment	Examples of risk or secondary hazard	Sources of General Non-site specific Data	Sources for Site Specific Data
Increased extreme precipitation	Known Hazard ☒ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☐	• Surface erosion • Floods (see below) • Water damage to structures from driven rain • Unstable saturated soils	• National Climate Assessment	• Evaluations are mostly at regional scales
Riverine flood/flash flood	Known Hazard ☒ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☐	• Damage or destruction of infrastructure • Stream channel migration • Stream bank erosion/extreme erosion • Safety • Water quality diminished • Damage to water source and delivery infrastructure • Changing requirements for culvert flow capacity	• FEMA Flood map service	• FEMA Map Service Center • Floodplain maps for HUD projects • Runoff projections (for select parks) • May require a special flood study
Sea/lake level change and coastal storm surge	Known Hazard ☐ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☒	• Rising sea and lake levels • Rising water – wind driven (e.g. hurricane, nor'easter) • Saltwater intrusion • Vegetation damage	• NOAA SLR viewer • NOAA - Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory	• IRMA – Coastal reports • NPS SLR viewer • Specific Hazard Assessment: Coastal Storm Surge with Climate Change Effects(requires VPN connection) • SLR reports • Great Lakes Dashboard Project

Potential Climate Hazard	Best Professional Judgment	Examples of risk or secondary hazard	Sources of General Non-site specific Data	Sources for Site Specific Data
Hurricanes and tornados	Known Hazard ☐ Potential Hazard ☐ Not Applicable ☒	• Building destruction • Flying debris • Storm surge • Tree fall (see other categories for associated intense rainfall and floods)		• Wind speed data – from local codes • International Building Code • FEMA Map Service Center
Pest infestation	Known Hazard ☐ Potential Hazard ☒ Not Applicable ☐	• Historic/facility fabric loss • Vegetation loss • Disease vectors may increase • Termites and other woodboring pests expanding range with warming and increased humidity	• USFS Forest Health Program	• Integrated Pest Management • Forest pests in eastern parks • USFS maps
Invasive species	Known Hazard ☐ Potential Hazard ☒ Not Applicable ☐	• Aquatic mussels – water intakes clogged • Vegetation (kudzu, vines) – damage buildings, kill trees, obstruct waterways	• National Invasive Species Council	• Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (current distribution) • Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (projected distribution)

Appendix 2. What Could the Park Climate Feel Like in 60 Years?

The map below can help visualize how the climate around Fort Vancouver National Historic Site could feel with continued climate change under high emissions by 2080, based on an analysis of climate model projections (Fitzpatrick and Dunn 2019). Under a high greenhouse gas emission scenario, Portland,

Oregon, then could feel similar to central California today. The red line shows the average of the 27 climate models; the black lines show the 27 individual projections. Smaller red circles indicate better matches. All circles (red or purple) denote cities used in the analysis. The analysis is based on twelve climate metrics, including minimum and maximum temperature and precipitation by season (spring, summer, fall, winter). More details are at <https://fitzlab.shinyapps.io/cityapp/>.



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Disclaimer

Report Purpose and Scope:

Parks identified for Legacy Restoration Funding in fiscal years 2023-2025 are required to develop a Great American Outdoors Act Facility Investment Plan (GFIP). The intended use of this series of park-specific reports is to help parks address Question 16 of the narrative template: *What risks or hazards (current and projected, e.g. effects of climate change) are likely to affect this project? If applicable, what adaptation strategies and/or resiliency measures have been identified for scenarios that pose high risks to project assets?*

Each report compiled and summarized published information on a suite of climate change hazards. Each report included an analysis of each hazard, for which the report author assigned a 'hazard rating' as follows:

Known hazard: Conditions that cause the hazard are well documented in the area where the park occurs. If applicable to the project site, these hazards should always be addressed in the project plan.

Potential hazard: Conditions that cause or underlie the hazard are known to occur nearby or are likely to occur based on studies with conditions similar to the park. If applicable to the project site, these hazards should be considered for inclusion in the project plan.

Not applicable: No evidence was identified showing this hazard is relevant to the park. Note this is a coarse filter evaluation; local knowledge of a hazard(s) should be used, when available.

As articulated within the report (in an appendix of the hazard ratings) those ratings constitute the author's 'best professional judgement' about the relevance of the hazard for that park based on the reviewed literature (cited in the narrative text for the hazard & provided in the report bibliography).

The intended use of each report is to inform decisions for facility investment planning related to (i) potential hazards that a suggested facility investment concept would need to appropriately consider and avoid or mitigate and (ii) identifying facilities possibly at greater relative vulnerability due to the identified hazards. The level of information quality in the report was calibrated to those purposes, i.e. to inform development of questions for a facility investment scoping process to further explore.

Peer Review Process:

Each report was based on a template, which heavily relied on boilerplate text for the non-park specific elements. The boilerplate text underwent multiple rounds of informal peer review by assorted CCRP staff, including members of the Climate Science and Adaptation Team, the Communications Team, the Regional Climate Change Liaisons, and the Climate Change Liaison to Facilities and Planning. Each report was peer-reviewed by a member of CCRP to check interpretation, consistency in hazard ratings, improve narrative coherence, and flag priority additions/modifications. In situations where revisions were required, the peer reviewer then re-reviewed the final revised report to assure adequate resolution of the identified issues.