applicable provisions of 18 USC 3571, or both.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John O. Singlaub, District Manager, Carson City District, Bureau of Land Management, 1535 Hot Springs Road, Carson City, Nevada 89706. Telephone: (702) 885–6000.

A map of the closed area is available at the Carson City District Office.

Dated: November 22, 1996.

Daniel L. Jacquet,

Acting District Manager, Carson City District.

[FR Doc. 96–31018 Filed 12–5–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–HC–M

National Park Service

Record of Decision; Final Environmental Impact Statement General Management Plan; Richmond National Battlefield Park, Virginia

Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91–190 as amended), and specifically to regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, has prepared the following Record of Decision on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the General Management Plan for the Richmond National Battlefield Park (RNBP), Virginia.

Introduction: Richmond National Battlefield Park, located in Hanover County, Henrico County, Chesterfield County, and the City of Richmond, Virginia, was established in 1936 by the Congress of the United States as part of the National Park System for the battlefield's historic significance.

Public Law 95–625, the National Parks and Recreation Act, requires the preparation and timely revision of GMPs for each unit of the national park system. Section 604 of that Act outlines several requirements for GMPs, including measures for the protection of the area's resources and ''indications of potential modifications to the external boundaries of the unit and the reasons therefor.'' The previous general plan for this Park was completed in 1971, called the Master Plan for Richmond National Battlefield Park. The issues at RNBP have changed dramatically since 1971. New challenges for park management have emerged since then.

This General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement identifies the purpose, significance, and primary interpretive themes for RNBP. The Plan addresses visitor experience, resource protection, and administrative requirements that will affect the park over approximately the next 15 years.

Background: The Park owns 763.99 acres in 11 individual units spread over a 132-square mile area. The Park interprets the repeated efforts by the Union army in 1862 and 1864–65 to take Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, and to destroy the Army or Northern Virginia. The Park contains relatively few acres for the thirty plus battles that occurred in the area. Many visitors expect to see more battlefield land preserved and support addition of more acreage to the park. The Congressional definition of the boundary for the park includes too much land for some property owners and local government representatives.

The park evolved from private and state actions to protect the battlefields. The March 2, 1936, authorizing act of Congress (49 Stat. 1155) defines the mission of RNBP as follows:

> * * * all such lands, structures, and other property in the military battlefield area or areas of the City of Richmond, Virginia, or within five miles of the city limits of said city or within five miles of the boundary of the present Richmond Battlefield State Park, as shall be designated by the Secretary of the Interior, in the exercise of his discretion as necessary or desirable for national battlefield park purposes, * * * such area or areas shall be, and they are hereby, established, dedicated, and set apart as a public park for the benefit and inspiration of the people and shall be known as the Richmond National Battlefield Park.

Decision (Selected Action): The National Park Service will implement the proposed action as described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement released July 29, 1996.

The National Park Service will manage resources, staff, and visitors in order to preserve the battlefields and interpret the military actions of the Richmond Civil War integrated with an understanding of the importance of the Confederate capital to both sides. Visitors will be directed to battlefields and other Civil War resource sites in Virginia. The main visitor center will remain at Chimborazo Park augmented with interpretation of the hospital story; NPS will continue to explore the possibilities for cooperative development of a heritage education/Civil War visitor center in Richmond. The plan responds actively to the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission report to Congress recommending federal involvement in protection of certain battlefields. RNBP's enabling legislation is proposed to be amended by Congress to authorize the appropriation and expenditure of federal funds for the purchase of battlefield lands, including specific tracts outside the existing legislative boundary. In order to allay concerns of property owners and be specific for potential donations, the NPS will request that Congress (1) redefine the authorized boundary of RNBP to reduce it to include approximately 7,121 acres, within which battlefield resource protection and/or interpretation would be accomplished through a partnership among local, state, and federal government and the private sector; and (2) stipulate that any real property interest acquired by the NPS be acquired only on a willing seller basis; and (3) authorize that appropriated funds may be used to acquire interest in real estate. The environmental consequences of this plan will include expansion of the battlefield resource protection effort, and, with partnerships with other entities, a greatly improved and integrated interpretation of all the Civil War resources in the Richmond area. Expanded partnerships and resource protection efforts would lead to an expanded visitor base. More visitors to the battlefields will result in longer visits to the area by more people, resulting in expanded heritage tourism and increased tourist spending. The benefits will positively affect the metropolitan Richmond area. Nationally significant battlefields would enjoy a greater measure of protection and natural resources would be carefully considered as cultural resource restoration and management plans are developed.

Basis for Decision: The draft plan for this park's general management was carefully crafted over a five year period with considerable public input.

At Richmond National Battlefield Park (RNBP) there is an opportunity to convey to visitors the meaning of the war. Not only is there a strategic explanation for the battles at Richmond, but also the Confederate capital's industrial, economic, political, and social fabric merge with the battlefield stories there. The concentration of diverse Civil War resources found in the Richmond area is unparalleled. A site-specific focus on the battles at Richmond, the combatants, and an understanding of why those battles occurred at Richmond can contribute to a visitor's understanding of the complexity of the American past and provide a means to appreciate strengths and shortcomings in our collective heritage. With a carefully developed battlefield preservation, commemoration, and interpretive effort, including close cooperation with other public and private agencies preserving Civil War resources, RNBP can become

a moving and eloquent place where visitors can examine for themselves the meaning of the American Civil War and its relevance in the modern world.

Protection and interpretation of the battlefield resources around Richmond has engendered debates about where, how much, and by whom since the local citizenry began the push for battlefield preservation early this century. In 1927 the Richmond Battlefield Parks Corporation began assembling the original battlefield acreage; and in 1932 the corporation deeded all of its property to the Commonwealth of Virginia to become Virginia's first state park—the Richmond Battlefield State Park. That same year, a study done by the Secretary of War for the U.S. Congress determined that these acres were appropriate for acquisition by the War Department should they be offered for donation. The War Department study further recommended that an additional 1,905 acres of core battlefield land be purchased. The donation was ultimately accepted by federal authorities, but he recommendation regarding additional land acquisition was not acted upon. In 1993 the Congressionally chartered Civil War Sites Advisory Commission submitted its report that highlighted seven (7) battlefields around Richmond in the list of the fifty most significant and most threatened battlefields in the country. This Plan is consistent with the recommendations of the Commission.

Other Alternatives Considered: Three other alternatives to the selected action were considered: (1). Under the no-action alternative, the park would continue to have amorphously defined boundaries that include large portions of developed land and would emphasize recreational development. This alternative was defined by the 1971 Park Master Plan and supporting implementation plans. The interpretive ideas were to deemphasize battle tactics and explain the Civil War in general in Richmond with no attempt to lead visitors on an interpretive theme from one site to another. Chimborazo would revert to the City while a new visitor center and headquarters would be constructed at Fort Harrison; (2) The first development option would create a new visitor center in downtown Richmond and deemphasize battlefield preservation. Interpretation would emphasize the importance of the Confederate capital, and visitors would be directed to a wide range of surviving Civil War resources in the metropolitan Richmond area; (3) The other development option would emphasize an expanded battlefield land protection and cultural/natural landscape scene restoration effort. The visitor center would be located adjacent to a battlefield, and interpretation would emphasize the military actions to take the city.

Measures to Minimize Impacts and Address Public Concerns: The environmental consequences of the proposed action and the other alternatives were fully documented in the DEIS and are re-presented with modifications in the FEIS. The public review period on the DEIS ended October 2, 1995. The ''Affected Environment'' section that follows the alternatives described the park's surroundings and community context, the current visitor experience, existing cultural and natural resources, and current park operations and administration. In the Environmental Consequences section the proposal and alternatives are analyzed for their general and specific impacts on the visitor experience, resource protection, park administration, and the surrounding community.

The results of public comment on the DEIS are included in the FEIS. A major concession on the part of the National Park Service was to eliminate objectionable provisions of the power of eminent domain and to propose to buy land from willing sellers only. Further, the Savage Station battlefield and parts of the Totopotomy Creek battlefield were dropped from the proposed boundary. The main Visitor Center is planned to remain at Chimborazo and partnerships with the private and public sectors pursued to augment visitor services to establish a Civil War center in Richmond.

Also in response to public comment, this action reaffirms the NPS commitment to battlefield resource protection and responds actively to the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission report to Congress recommending federal involvement at certain battlefields. Changes in the park's enabling legislation would be sought to authorize the appropriation and expenditure of federal funds for the purchase of battlefield lands, including specific tracts outside the existing legislative boundary. These changes will enable RNBP to be a more effective steward and partner with private interests and local and state governments to protect the principal Civil War resources associated with the long and difficult struggle for the capital of the Confederacy and to interpret these resources so as to foster an understanding of their significance as parts of a whole. If the legislation is not enacted, the plan will be able to be effected except that property would be acquired only through the use of donations.

The no-action period on this final plan and environmental impact statement ended September 9, 1996, thirty (30) days after the publication of a notice of availability in the Federal Register.

Environmentally Preferable Action: The environmentally preferred alternative is the one that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. If is the alternative that best protects, preserves and enhances the historic, cultural, and natural resources of the area where the proposed action is to take place.

The proposal is the alternative the best fits the definition. This Plan will best protect resources cultural and natural.

Conclusion: The above factors and considerations justify selection of the preferred alternative as the General Management Plan for the Richmond National Battlefield Park as identified and detailed in the final EIS.

Park personnel will begin working with local and state officials, the private sector, other staff of the National Park Service, and the Congress of the United States to implement the plan.

Dated: November 25, 1996.

Cynthia MacLeod,

Superintendent, Richmond National Battlefield Park, (804) 226–1981.

Dated: November 26, 1996.

Warren D. Beach,

Assistant Field Director, Northeast Field Area, (215) 597–7013.

[FR Doc. 96–30702 Filed 12–5–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–70–M

General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement for Keweenaw National Historical Park, Michigan

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the General Management Plan for Keweenaw National Historical Park, Michigan.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park Service, Department of the Interior will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to assess the potential impacts of future development and management options in conjunction with the General Management Plan for Keweenaw National Historical Park, Michigan.

Preparation of a draft General Management Plan began in 1995 and included preparation of a draft Environmental Assessment. Scoping for