34th America's Cup Environmental Assessment







The Presidio Trust



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 42 USC 4332(2)(C)), the National Park Service and the U.S. Coast Guard, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Presidio Trust, are preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential effects of the 34th America's Cup sailing races on the lands and waters administered by the federal government.

Project Summary

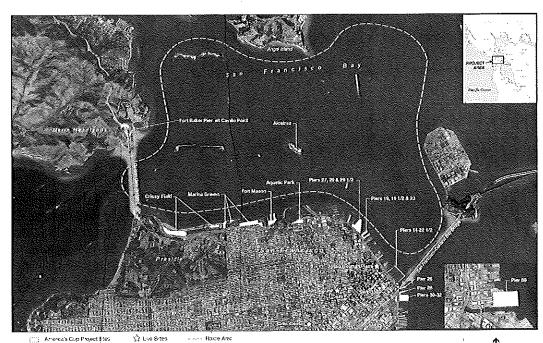
On December 31, 2010, the City of San Francisco was chosen as the location to host the 34th America's Cup (AC34) sailing races. The America's Cup race events are proposed to take place in Summer-Fall 2013, with preliminary "World Series" races in Summer-Fall 2012. Several of the sites proposed for the America's Cup spectator areas and events include national park areas and facilities, and marine areas subject to the U.S. Coast Guard authority. In addition, in-water construction and dredging are proposed along the San Francisco waterfront and would be subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers authority. Roads and access managed by the Presidio Trust could also be affected.

Project Location and Supplementary Information

Spectators interested in viewing the races may be drawn to many of the land and water sites under the jurisdiction of above federal agencies including Aquatic Park within San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (SAFR) and sites in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) including (but not necessarily limited to) Fort Mason, Crissy Field, Alcatraz Island, Fort Baker, and Conzelman Road in the Marin Headlands. This also includes the waters of the San Francisco Bay and those immediately outside the Golden Gate Bridge. Certain areas under management of the Presidio Trust could also be affected. Spectator areas would be managed to protect parklands and sensitive habitats in coordination with and authorization from the agencies having jurisdiction over these areas as well as visitor access and enjoyment.

Proposed Race Area

The AC34 sailing races are proposed to be held on San Francisco Bay within an area bounded by the San Francisco waterfront to the south; the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, Treasure Island, and Yerba Buena Island to the east; portions of southern Marin County (including Angel Island) to the north; and an area just beyond the Golden Gate Bridge to the west. The actual race courses for the sailing races would be located within a smaller portion of this area to be determined by government agency coordination and permit conditions as well as final race conditions in 2012 and 2013.



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Environmental Assessment

The National Park Service and the U.S. Coast Guard will serve as co-lead agencies with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Presidio Trust as cooperating agencies. An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared for the proposed project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) prior to any final decision regarding whether to approve the project. The purpose of the EA is to provide information about potential environmental effects of the federal actions associated with the proposed project for each of the federal agencies with management authority in their respective jurisdictions. It also will identify possible ways to minimize the effects, and to determine whether or not the potential for significant impacts as defined by NEPA Regulations exists. It is anticipated at this time that federal actions associated with this project would require an EA. The EA will provide sufficient evidence and analysis to determine the need to prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In the case of the latter, public scoping for the EA would serve as the required scoping for the EIS.

Federal Actions

The National Park Service issues Special Use Permits for authorized uses of their sites. Many of the spectator viewing areas are proposed on lands within the GGNRA and SAFR. The National Park Service will examine the environmental impact of proposed temporary spectator viewing areas on the natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources and values within park sites and waters. A Marine Event Permit issued by the U.S. Coast Guard would also be required for the implementation of this project and is subject to review procedures under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A Marine Event Permit provides effective control over the permitted events on navigable waters of the United States so as to ensure the safety of life in the event and spectator areas. The permitting process enables the Coast Guard to resolve potential conflicts and issue Special Local Regulations or establish safety and security zones for the waters of the event.

A Section 404 Permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would also be required for this project and is also subject to review procedures under NEPA. The 404 Permit governs fill of Waters of the U.S., which includes the proposed construction of temporary docking facilities as well as proposed placement of temporary boat mooring anchors along the San Francisco waterfront. The Corps' permitting process ensures that required fill is minimized and conducted in a manner that reduces any adverse environmental effects.

Public Scoping Meetings

The public is invited to participate in the scoping process for this project by attending one of the public meetings, reviewing the documents on the internet at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/AC34 and submitting comments online. Written comments will also be accepted at ESA, attn: Erin Higbee-Kollu, 550 Kearny Street, Suite 900, San Francisco, CA 94108.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS will be held on:

- Wednesday, August 17, 2011, 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the Bay Model Visitor Center, 2100 Bridgeway, Sausalito (this will be part of the regularly scheduled Golden Gate National Recreation Area open house).
- Thursday, August 18, 2011, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Golden Gate Club, 135 Fisher Loop on the Main Post in the Presidio, San Francisco
- Tuesday, August 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Waterfront Hotel, 10 Washington Street, Oakland

Comments on the scoping of the 34th America's Cup project will be most helpful if received by September 7th, 2011. An official closing date for scoping has not been determined yet and will be posted on the website.

Note: Please be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Additional project information may be found at http://www.americascupnepa.org or http://parkplanning.nps.gov/AC34 beginning on August 5th, 2011.