

NEW JERSEY COASTAL HERITAGE TRAIL

PRELIMINARY IMPLEMENTATION ALTERNATIVES

National Park Service

November 1991

As we told you in our August 1991 newsletter, a concept has been selected for the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail – a concept that will bring an exciting new dimension to resource preservation and interpretation efforts in this part of the state. This second newsletter presents four possible alternatives for implementing that concept. We encourage you to read all of the background information in this newsletter, including the planning decisions that have been made to date, and then to consider which of the four alternatives you think is the most effective way of implementing the trail concept. A mailback form is included in the newsletter where you can record your ideas and opinions about the trail. In addition, open house meetings are scheduled in several New Jersey locations during November, and we hope that you will join us at one of them to discuss the future of the trail. Public meeting dates and times are listed at the end of the newsletter.

A NEW TRAIL LOGO

To highlight the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail theme concept that is described in this newsletter, a new logo has been created. The logo reflects the unity of the trail area and the diversity of the resources within it. A black-and-white reproduction of the logo is shown here.

The new logo presents the entire trail project area within a defined border. The juxtaposition of the flowing, organic shape of the project area and sharp edge of the type is intended to create a feeling of contrast, of unity encompassing diversity. Simplicity has been stressed for easy recognition in many forms, ranging from small brochures to highway signs. The colors to be used in the official logo have been chosen to reflect the natural setting – blue for the water, green for the project area, tan for the background, and a rich dark brown for the lettering. The logo will be displayed on all trail signs and other identifying markers.



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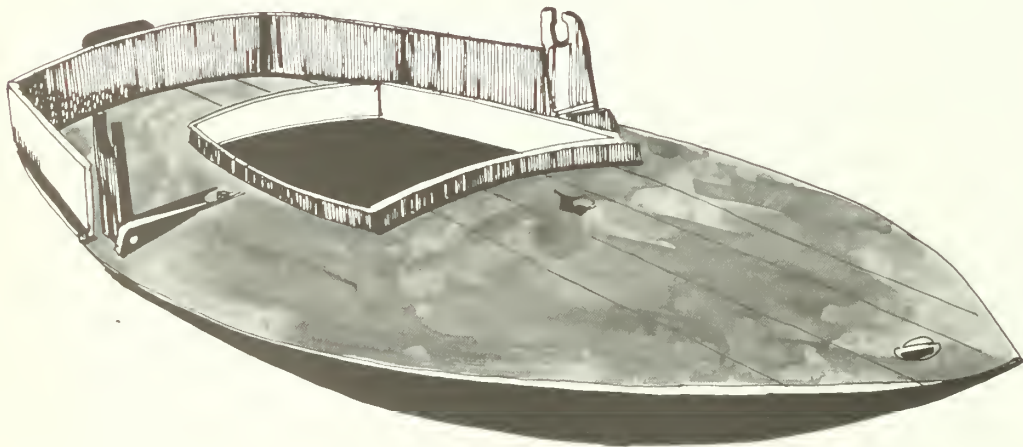
BACKGROUND AND TRAIL CONCEPT

The New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail was authorized by Congress in 1988 to provide for public understanding and enjoyment of sites and resources associated with the coastal area of New Jersey (Public Law 100-515). The law directed the National Park Service to inventory all natural and cultural resources in the project area and to prepare a general plan for protecting and interpreting selected resources.

In November 1990 the National Park Service released a *Study of Alternatives* for the coastal heritage trail, which included a preliminary inventory of resources and five alternative concepts for trail protection and interpretation. In April 1991, after public review and comment on the study, the National Park Service selected one of the concepts to provide future direction for the trail.

The proposed trail will have three components:

- The trail will be designed for vehicle touring. Trail themes will be developed to link sites of state and national significance as well as other sites that are determined to best represent a particular aspect of a theme. The trail and any theme or tour routes that are established will be managed by the state of New Jersey with assistance from the National Park Service. A state agency or commission will be designated to coordinate overall management; that agency or commission will be supported by the cooperative efforts of federal, state, and local partners.
- A federal anchor will be established at the Sandy Hook unit of Gateway National Recreation Area in the northern portion of the trail. The National Park Service will continue to manage Sandy Hook and will establish trail facilities and services there.
- A site for a federal anchor will be explored in the southern part of the project area. The National Park Service will prepare a special resource study of the New Jersey side of Delaware Bay to determine its significance and to identify management alternatives. The National Park Service may act as a coordinator for activities in the bay area, bringing together public and private owners with interests in protecting area resources and providing expertise in planning and interpretation.





Study Area

PLANNING DIRECTION

In September 1991 the planning team for the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail met to discuss the approved trail concept and to develop preliminary implementation alternatives for the trail. The planning team includes representatives from the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Energy, and the Pinelands Commission as well as National Park Service staff. During the September meetings the team set project goals, refined the trail themes, established site selection criteria, and identified several elements that are common to all of the implementation alternatives.

Project Goals

To implement the trail concept, the planning team established the following project goals:

Resource Protection – To develop public advocacy for the protection of the natural, cultural, and scenic resources of the coastline through interpretation, education, and research.

Visitor Services – To provide for visitor needs through existing facilities or, where none exist, through cooperating groups or agencies. To plan trail routes and visitor facilities to minimize impacts on local communities and their natural and cultural settings and to ensure visitor safety.

Interpretation and Visitor Experiences – To provide opportunities for all visitors to learn about and experience New Jersey's diverse coastal heritage and to expand public awareness of the significance of the coast; to encourage interaction between people and the environment throughout the trail area.

Trail Themes

Themes will provide the basis for selecting sites to be included in the trail. Based on comments at a series of workshops, the team developed five major themes that best represent the heritage of the New Jersey coast.

Maritime Theme – Historically, New Jersey's strategic geographic position on the mid-Atlantic coast prompted the development of navigational aids and coastal defenses. This theme will be illustrated by sites along the coast and on the barrier islands and will include harbor installations, lighthouses, forts, and sites related to the people who developed them.

Wildlands Theme – New Jersey's barrier islands, coastal wetlands, estuaries, bays, and rivers provide habitat, nurseries, and refuges for a rich diversity of plant and animal life. This theme will explore natural communities in the region, from tidal areas to the Pine Barrens.

Migration Theme – The New Jersey coast provides critical habitat for many of the Western Hemisphere's migrating species. During seasonal migrations, sites throughout the project area will provide opportunities to view the migratory activities of species like the snow geese along the Atlantic Flyway and aquatic mammals along the coast.

R&R Theme – The allure of the New Jersey coastal environment, combined with its proximity to populated areas, has resulted in its traditional use as a destination for recreation, leisure, and inspirational activities. This theme will highlight recreational uses of the Jersey shore over the years and the historic hotels, amusement parks, and other developments provided to support them. Use of the coast for religious retreats will also be described.

Lifeways Theme – Prehistoric and historic uses of New Jersey coastal areas will be explored under this theme. Prehistoric peoples used the coast for seasonal habitation. Various historical industries, including glassmaking, cranberry cultivation, and boat building, derived from the natural resources in the area. Both historical and contemporary examples of regional industries will be identified.

Site Selection Criteria

Site selection will be one of the first activities in implementing the concept for the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail. Sites will be selected based on criteria ranging from significance to accessibility and will have to meet *all* of the criteria to be considered for inclusion in the trail. The criteria are as follows:

Location – The site or a portion of the site must lie within the project boundary.

Significance – The site must reflect one of the trail themes and must be determined to be significant based on one of the following criteria:

- listing or eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or New Jersey Register of Historic Places as having state or national significance
- status or eligibility for status as a national or state natural resource protection area
- importance in telling a theme-related story, that is, a determination that the site best represents a particular aspect of a theme

Interpretation – The site must have existing or proposed interpretive and educational programs related to one of the trail themes.

Management – Site operators must demonstrate the following abilities or intentions:

- They must be able to meet local, state, and federal regulations for health, safety, and physical accessibility.
- They must be willing to promote the coastal heritage trail.
- They must be willing to sign a nondiscrimination agreement.
- They must have community endorsement of their application through municipal, county, or other governing body approval as determined by the state.

Access – The site must be accessible from public roads.

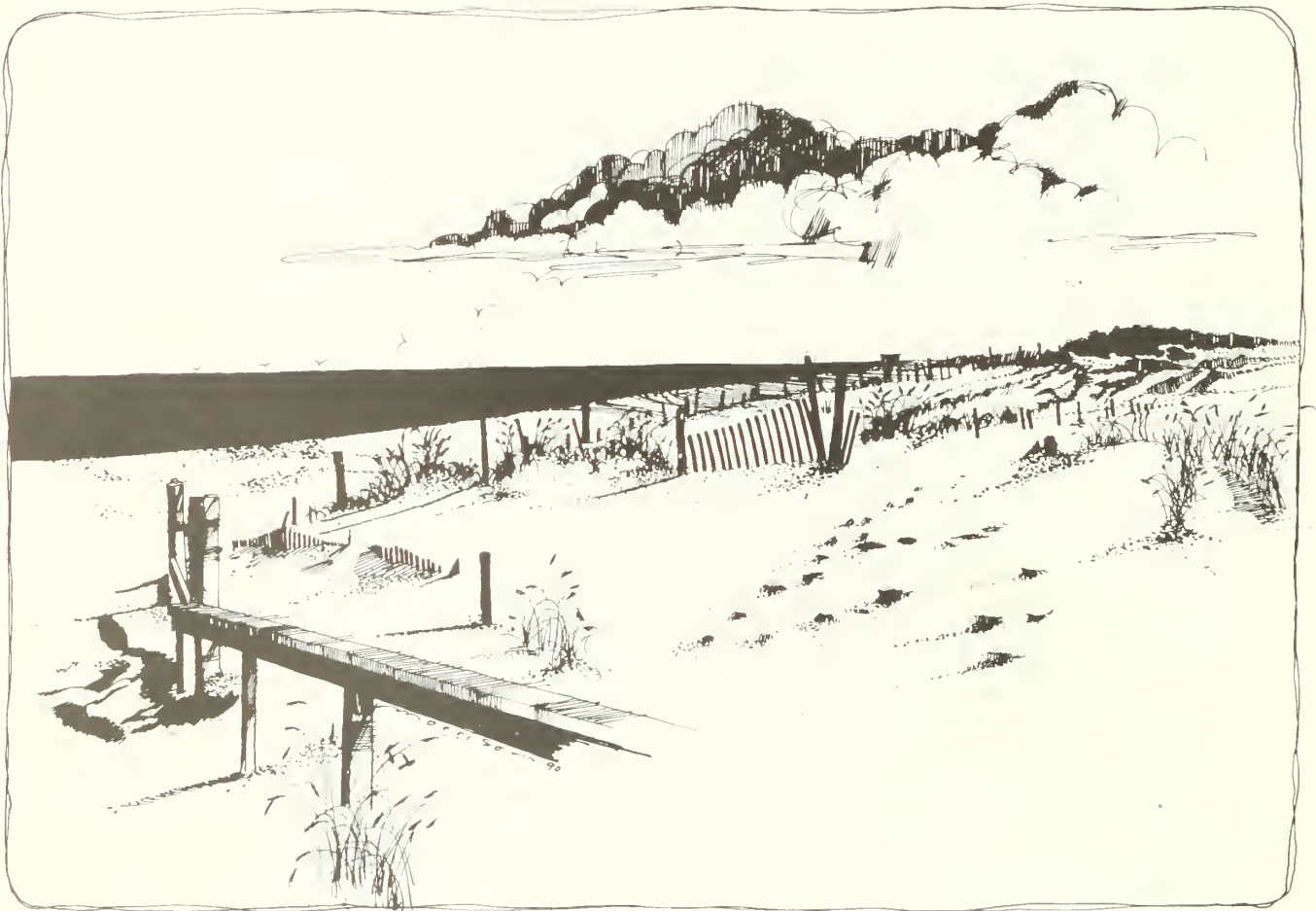
After initial site selection, periodic site reviews will be carried out, and new sites selected, based on the approved criteria.

Elements Common to All Alternatives

In developing the preliminary implementation alternatives for the coastal heritage trail, the planning team identified the following elements that will be part of any alternative that is selected.

- Long-term management of the coastal heritage trail will be the responsibility of the state of New Jersey through a trail management group specifically designated by the state. A new agency or commission could be created for the specific purpose of trail management. This could be a state agency or a quasi-state agency with private sector involvement that allows site subscription and permit fees to be charged.
- The state management group and National Park Service will cooperate in preparing the overall management document for the trail. The state management group will be responsible for the ongoing selection and certification of sites to be included in the trail. Participation in the trail will be voluntary. The management group will establish and enforce trailwide standards related to interpretive programs and services, and it will be responsible for the production, updating, and distribution of trail publications.

- The National Park Service will manage the trail anchor at Sandy Hook in the northern part of the project area and will provide technical assistance to the state management group as requested; limited financial assistance will also be provided for a period of five years.
- If a portion of the Delaware Bay area is determined to be nationally significant after the NPS special resource study is completed, additional federal legislation will be required to establish it as the southern trail anchor and provide resource protection. Interpretation at the southern anchor will focus on the Delaware Bay's New Jersey coast.
- The trail will have no more than five themes.
- The federal anchor(s) and all trail sites will display the trail logo and a general orientation map and will distribute trail information. Each site will be responsible for developing, maintaining, and expanding its own day-to-day operations, including interpretive activities.
- The operators of all participating sites will be required to attend periodic interpretive training. The state management group will be responsible for providing the training; the National Park Service may provide technical assistance in this training if requested by the state.
- Where trail routes are designated, they will follow existing roads. The concurrence of the agencies having jurisdiction over those roads will be obtained. No new road construction is anticipated.
- Close cooperation will be maintained with the Pinelands Commission in all planning for the coastal heritage trail.



PRELIMINARY IMPLEMENTATION ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVE 1 - DESIGNATED ROUTES

Under this alternative a network of theme-oriented routes would be the focus of the trail. These well-defined routes would link sites representing each theme and would be supported by two major federal visitor centers – one at Sandy Hook and the other potentially in the Delaware Bay area.

Routes

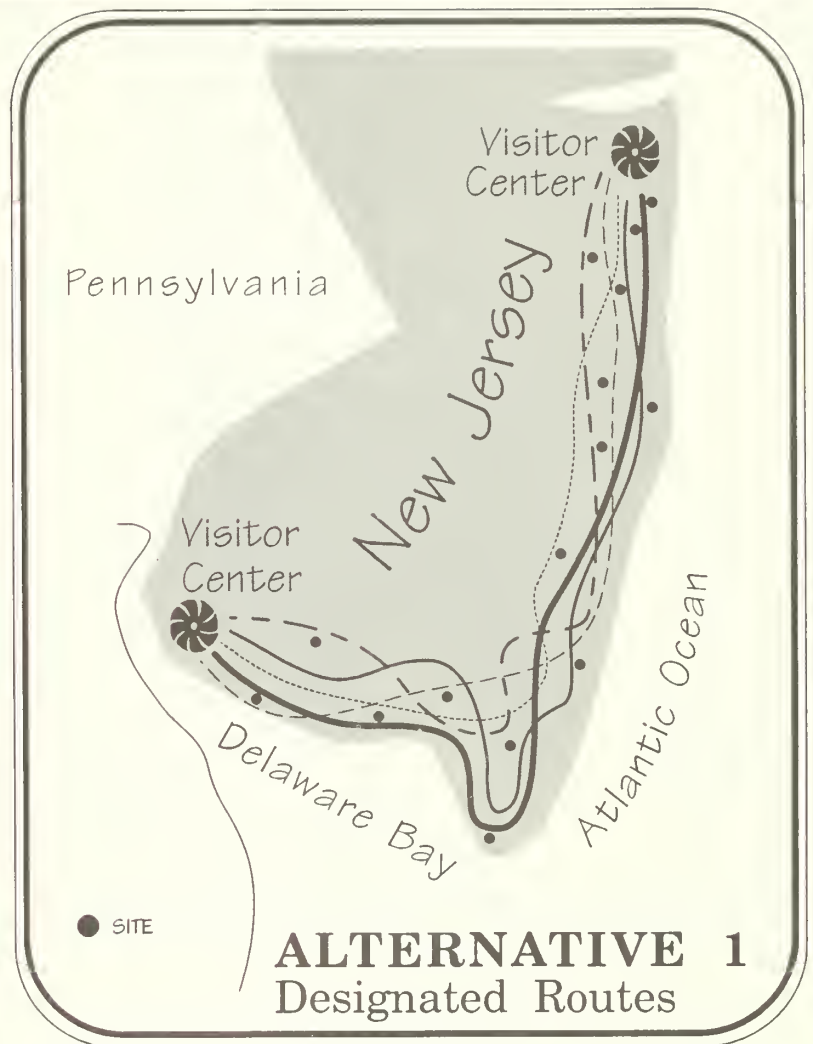
Designated theme routes would be clearly marked with the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail logo and directional signs. Where possible, the theme routes would follow secondary, scenic roads rather than major highways to enhance visitor experiences. Exhibits at each trail site would provide information about the location of sites within the entire trail network. Visitors would be directed along the theme routes through a coordinated system of highway signs and markers, guidebooks, site brochures, and location maps at the sites.

Interpretation

The visitor centers at Sandy Hook and potentially in the Delaware Bay area would provide audiovisual programs and permanent exhibits describing the five trail themes. A publication would be developed for each theme, which would include a theme route map, site descriptions, and natural or cultural histories. A route-coordinated exhibit would be established at each trail site to relate the site to the theme it represents and to provide a map of the theme route(s) into which the site fits. A brochure would be available explaining the site's natural or cultural importance.

State and Federal Roles

The state of New Jersey would be responsible for trail management, marketing, signing, and maintenance of the trail markers along state rights-of-way. Federal participation would include management of the visitor center at the northern anchor and coordination of activities at the southern anchor. The National Park Service would coordinate the design and development of route signs and site/wayside exhibits, cooperate in the development and publication of a theme-oriented series of guidebooks and brochures, and provide technical assistance to individual sites in interpretation, maintenance, and collection stabilization. These responsibilities would be turned over to the state management group after the initial trail sites were fully operational.





ALTERNATIVE 2 - REGIONAL DISCOVERY

Under alternative 2 the trail themes would be presented on a regional or sectional basis. The Garden State Parkway and Route 49 would constitute the main travel corridor, or "spine," for the trail, and well-marked routes would lead from the spine to five regional information centers and one trail visitor center. These centers would serve as hubs from which visitors could travel to all theme sites in the immediate geographic area. The northern federal anchor would become the trail visitor center; if established, the southern anchor would function as a regional information center.

Routes

Trail routes would extend from the Garden State Parkway and Route 49 to the nearest regional information center or visitor center. Routes to these centers would be mapped, and site locations identified, in trail guidebooks and brochures. Signs would direct visitors to exhibits in parkway rest areas and to the visitor/information centers. Directional signs might be purchased by individual sites.

Interpretation

Public/private partnerships would be established for the distribution of trail information. General information would be distributed through state marketing programs and at state information centers, toll booths and rest areas along the Garden State Parkway, private businesses along trail routes, and the two federal visitor/information centers. Information would also be provided at public and private centers along the Route 49 corridor. The regional information centers would be placed in existing facilities wherever possible.

Interpretation at the federal visitor/information centers would include audiovisual programs and exhibits illustrating the themes of the trail. Both centers would provide information about the entire trail as well as trail maps and brochures for each region or section of the trail. Rest areas and highway exit areas would include information exhibits and access to interpretive materials and maps.

State and Federal Roles

The state of New Jersey would be responsible for trail management, marketing, and sign installation and maintenance. Federal participation would include management of the trail visitor center and one of the regional information centers, design and development of information exhibits at rest areas and trail sites, and publication of brochures for the initial sites. Responsibilities for exhibit and publication development would be turned over to the state management group after the initial trail sites were fully operational.

ALTERNATIVE 3 - THEME DISCOVERY

This alternative would involve theme rather than regional information centers. Limited information would be dispensed at existing facilities on the Garden State Parkway and Route 49, and signs on major roads would direct people to the theme centers, but the focus would be on individual discovery of theme-related sites. The northern federal anchor would serve as the trail visitor center; if established, the southern anchor would function as a theme center.

Routes

Routes to the theme and visitor centers would be mapped in trail guidebooks and brochures; each theme would have a separate map. Signs would direct visitors from the nearest major intersections to the centers. Directional signs could be purchased by individual sites.

Interpretation

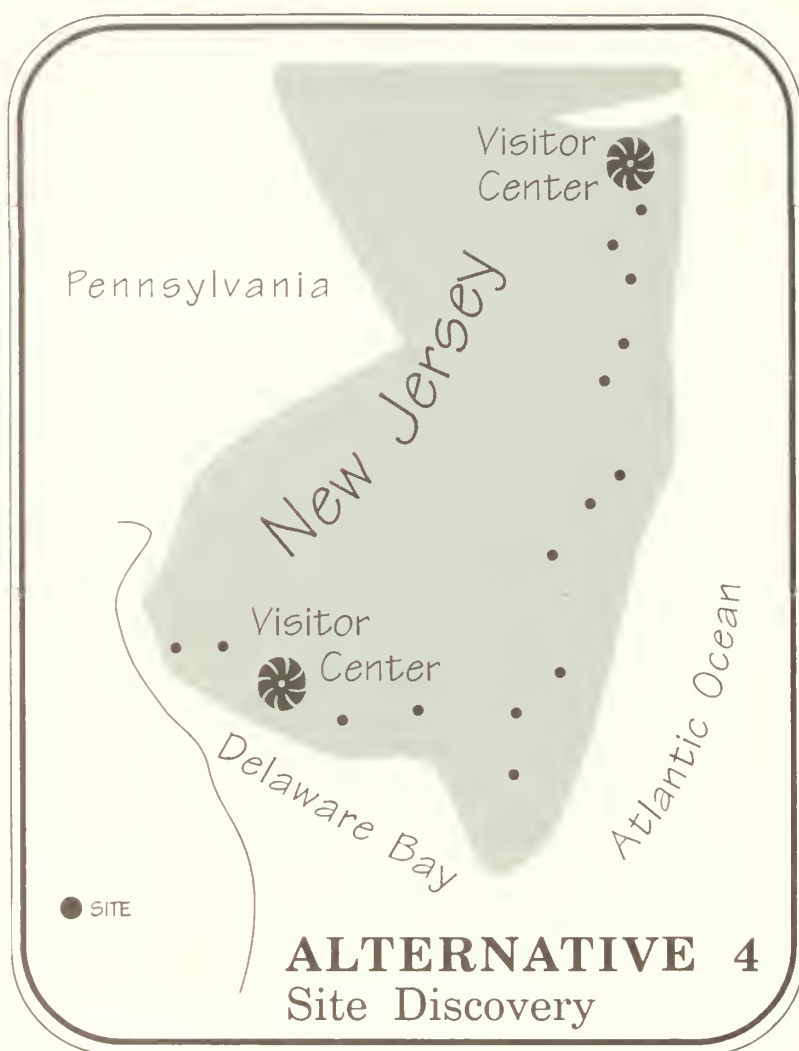
Limited trail information would be available at existing facilities along the Garden State Parkway and Route 49. Information at the theme centers would focus on individual themes; the trail visitor center would treat all five themes. Where possible, the theme visitor centers would be placed in existing facilities that already promote some aspect of the trail theme; the existing facilities might be expanded, or existing exhibits refocused, to relate more directly to the theme.

Interpretation at the federal visitor/theme centers would include audiovisual programs and exhibits illustrating the themes of the trail. Both centers would provide information about the entire trail as well as trail maps and brochures for each of the themes.

State and Federal Roles

The state of New Jersey would be responsible for trail management, marketing, and sign installation and maintenance. Federal participation would include management of the trail visitor center and one of the theme centers, design and development of information exhibits at the trail sites, and publication of the brochures for the initial sites. Responsibilities for exhibit and publication development would be turned over to the state management group after the initial trail sites were fully operational.





ALTERNATIVE 4 – SITE DISCOVERY

Under this alternative the focus would be at the site level. No marked routes or regional or theme centers would link trail resources. All trail coordination, marketing, and signing would be the responsibility of the designated state management group, and federal involvement would be minimal. Current federal research, planning, and inventory studies would be completed, and the National Park Service would provide recommendations to the state management group based on that work. The Park Service would also provide technical assistance in interpretation as requested by the state.

Routes

No trail routes would be established. Sites would be designated and publicized by the state management group as a system of resources linked to illustrate the five themes of the coastal heritage trail. The inventory and research activities currently being conducted by the National Park Service would provide the basis for site certification.

Interpretation

There would be two visitor centers for the trail – one in the north and one in the south. These centers and all trail sites would dispense general information about the trail. Individual sites would continue to be responsible for their own interpretation; NPS assistance in developing interpretive techniques would be available to the state management group. Various methods might be used to link sites to the trail and trail themes, including providing brochures, guidebooks, and maps. The state management group would develop an overall trail map identifying all selected trail sites and coding them by theme.

State and Federal Roles

Development and management responsibilities would lie with the state management group. Duties would include marketing, coordination, site review and selection, and marking site locations.



Please help us by providing your ideas about our plans for the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail.

What are your comments and suggestions about

the five trail themes _____

the criteria for site selection _____

the elements common to all alternatives _____

Which alternative (or elements of more than one alternative) do you think provides the best framework for implementing the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail concept? _____

Which routing scheme do you prefer – designated theme routes or site identification without route designation? _____

Do you have particular concerns about the implementation of any of the alternatives? _____

Additional comments and suggestions _____



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FUTURE ACTIVITIES

As indicated in the introduction, a mailback form is enclosed in this newsletter so that you can send us your comments and suggestions about implementing the trail concept. Please take the time to record your ideas and mail them to us. In addition to your mailback responses, we hope that you will be able to attend one of following open house meetings to be held in the project area in November.

Open House Meetings

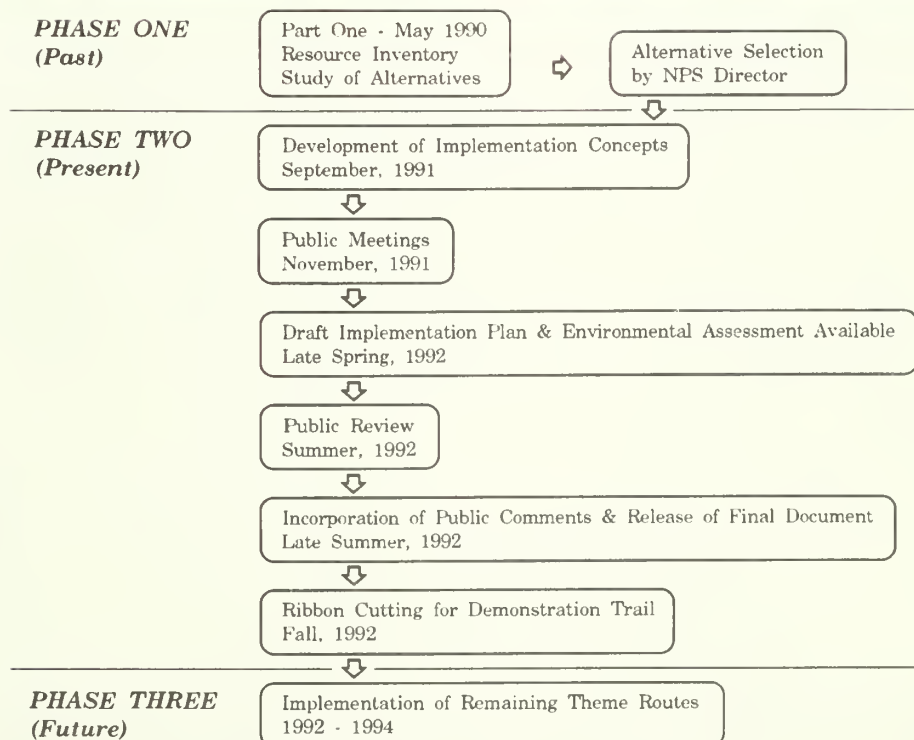
Wednesday, November 13	Thursday, November 14	Friday, November 15	Saturday, November 16
2:00-4:00 p.m. Sandy Hook Unit, Gateway National Recreation Area	9:00-11:00 a.m. South Ocean County Resource Center, Manahawkin	9:00-11:00 a.m. Cumberland County Library, Bridgeton	10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Municipal Building, Shrewsbury
7:00-9:00 p.m. Dover Township Municipal Building, Toms River	7:00-9:00 p.m. Old Court House, Cape May Court House	3:30-5:30 p.m. Courthouse, Salem	

Please check your local newspapers or call the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail project office to verify times and locations. The project office phone number is (609) 785-0676.

Proposed Demonstration Route

A demonstration trail route focusing on the maritime theme is currently being planned and developed. This route will be opened for public use in October 1992. A representative sample of sites will be included in the demonstration route – just a few of the many sites that may qualify to become part of the trail.

NEW JERSEY COASTAL HERITAGE TRAIL PROJECT SCHEDULE



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