

2011

# Old Sitka State Historical Park Preservation Plan



Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation  
Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
7/15/2011

# STATE OF ALASKA

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**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
*Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation*

July 15, 2011

Dear Alaskan:

Established to preserve the location of the first Russian fort in the Alexander Archipelago, the site of an important battle between the Tlingit and the Russians and Aleuts, and important for its association with Europeans settlement of northwestern North America, Old Sitka State Historical Park is an important location for its rich history. In 1962, the site was listed as a National Historic Landmark, the highest designation a historic property can achieve in the country.

The Old Sitka State Historical Park Preservation Plan was created to provide a framework for decisions pertaining to cultural resource protection and interpretive development. It is designed to be used during the next 20 years, though periodic reviews are expected and encouraged.

This plan represents the Division's efforts to conserve and interpret Old Sitka State Historical Park's historical and cultural resources for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of Alaskans and visitors. It is the product of a substantial planning effort and the involvement and participation of community members and organizations. Those who participated in this planning process have helped shape not only this document, but the way in which the valuable heritage resources of Old Sitka State Historical Park will be preserved and interpreted for future generations. I am grateful to all who helped develop this plan.

Sincerely,



Ben Ellis  
Director

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, in coordination with the National Park Service, manages the **Preserve America** program—a federal initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy cultural and natural heritage resources. In 2008, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation awarded a Preserve America grant to the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) to create preservation plans for those units of the Alaska State Park system designated as National Historic Landmarks. Those units include Fort Abercrombie State Historical Park in Kodiak, and Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park, Baranof Castle Hill State Historic Site, and Old Sitka State Historical Park—all located in Sitka.

Established as a National Historic Landmark in 1962 and a state historical park in 1968, Old Sitka was the site of the first Russian fort in the Alexander Archipelago, the site of an important battle between the Tlingit and the Russians and Aleuts, and was significant for its association with European settlement of northwestern North America.

The ***Old Sitka State Historical Park Preservation Plan*** provides a framework for decisions pertaining to cultural resource protection, interpretive program development, and stewardship of the park. The preservation planning process involved inventorying resources, compiling research, and discussing and sharing ideas with park managers, industry professionals, and interested public during public meetings and comment periods.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION



## HOW DID THIS PLANNING EFFORT COME ABOUT?

The Old Sitka State Historical Park (SHP) Preservation Plan supports the division’s goal to “sustain Alaska’s cultural, ecological, scenic and scientific assets through proactive stewardship pursuant to the division’s parks and programs,” as outlined in the division’s 10 year strategic plan.<sup>1</sup> The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s *Preserve America* program awarded a planning grant to the Office of History and Archaeology because preservation plans are valuable tools for preserving and enhancing historical, cultural, archaeological, and anthropological values, and promoting the enjoyment and stewardship of heritage resources. ***Old Sitka State Historical Park Preservation Plan*** is one of four preservation plans developed for the National Historic Landmarks managed by the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (ADPOR).

## WHAT IS A PRESERVATION PLAN SUPPOSED TO DO?

The preservation plan provides guidelines to assist park staff in reaching their short- and long-term objectives for the preservation and enhancement of cultural and historical resources and in making informed decisions regarding the day-to-day management of these resources. The document is intended to be a dynamic tool used to enhance and preserve the park’s historical, cultural, archaeological, and anthropological values, to promote the enjoyment and stewardship of the park resources, to support local recreation and tourism, and to encourage a variety of recreational and educational opportunities in the park for visitors of varying abilities. This preservation plan provides guidelines rather than hard and fast rules. The plan supports, but does not replace, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Alaska Historic Preservation Act, or National Environmental Policy Act.

## WHAT IS A STATE HISTORICAL PARK?

The “Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework” identifies designations for different types of parks based on their primary values to the public. Old Sitka is a *state historical park* defined as “an area containing an assemblage of significant historical, cultural, archaeological, or anthropological resources from representative eras of Alaska’s history or prehistory. The dominant management objective of a historic park is to preserve and interpret historic resources for Alaskans and visitors to the state.”<sup>2</sup>

## PLAN ROAD MAP

The plan has four principal components—goals and objectives, a brief historical and cultural background of the park, current park conditions, and recommended preservation and interpretation strategies for achieving the outlined goals. In addition, useful documents such as a glossary for preservation-specific language, archaeological monitoring forms, and treatment standards are attached as appendices.

## PUBLIC PROCESS

On August 10 and 11, 2009, an interdisciplinary team including an interpretive specialist, preservationist, and archaeologist visited Old Sitka State Historical Park to identify and inventory the historic features of this park, evaluate its current uses and preservation issues, and outline interpretive possibilities. A public

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<sup>1</sup> Alaska Div. of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, *Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation: Ten Year Strategic Plan 2007-2017*. (Alaska Div. of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, 2007), 22-25.

<sup>2</sup> Park Planning Section of Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, *Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework*. (Alaska Div. of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, 1982), 8.

scoping meeting was held on August 10, 2009, in Sitka to allow interested public and professionals to discuss the use of Old Sitka, identify appropriate interpretive themes, and preservation priorities. Public comments were accepted through September 2009. After the public comment period ended, the preservation planning team compiled additional information, evaluated alternatives, and developed priorities. A draft plan was prepared and distributed for public review on August 11, 2010. A public meeting was held on August 26, 2010 in Sitka to receive comments on the draft preservation plan. Public comments were received until September 17, 2010. After the comment period ended, the planning team addressed comments and incorporated comments where necessary. The Director of Parks and Outdoor Recreation signed and accepted the plan on July 15, 2011.

## CHAPTER 2: PLAN VISION, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES



## OLD SITKA STATE HISTORICAL PARK PRESERVATION PLAN VISION

The Old Sitka State Historical Park Preservation Plan has a vision to advance and preserve the park's historical cultural, archaeological, and anthropological values, to promote the enjoyment and stewardship of the park resources, to support local recreation and tourism, and to encourage a variety of recreational and educational opportunities in the park for visitors of varying abilities.

## PRESERVATION GOALS

The goals and objectives outlined below are intended to facilitate the management of Old Sitka State Historical Park while protecting and enhancing the park's heritage.

- Instill in park visitors a sense of stewardship for historic resources
- Develop an interpretive program that highlights the story of the Battle of 1802 between the Russians and Tlingit and brings the importance of this site and what occurred here to the visitor's attention
- Instill in park visitors a sense of reverence for what occurred at the site and for those who lost their lives during this early conflict

## OBJECTIVES

Specific objectives to accomplish the overarching preservation goals have been developed.

### INSPIRE STEWARDSHIP

- Identify partners, research possibilities, and education opportunities that will help the division preserve and interpret Old Sitka SHP
- Maintain the division's leadership role in historic preservation, natural resource conservation, and interpretive programming in Alaska by advocating for the resources, protecting and interpreting significant features and stories, and actively managing the historic and cultural resources

### DEVELOP INTERPRETATION

- Develop interpretive programming that reflects the multi-faceted character of the site's story by recognizing all parties involved in the 1802 battle and telling all sides of the story to the greatest extent possible

### INSTILL REVERENCE

- Impart in visitors a reverence for the past through effective site planning and interpretive programming

## CHAPTER 3: HISTORY AND CULTURE



## RUSSIAN INFLUENCES AND THE BATTLE OF 1802

The Old Sitka State Historical Park marks the former location of the Russian fort, Redoubt St. Archangel Michael, the first foothold established by the Shelikof-Golikov Company (later known as the Russian American Company) in the Alexander Archipelago. Alexander Baranof established the fort in July of 1799 after negotiations with the local *Kiks.ádi* clan of the Tlingit people. The Russians built the redoubt (fortification) at *Gajaa Héen*, south of Starrigavan Creek, a location that the *Kiks.ádi* used for drying fish.

The Russians first erected a large storage shed, then a small bath house that Baranof later made his residence. Next, the Russians built a two-story barracks, with watchtowers in two corners. In the spring of 1800, Baranof left the redoubt for Kodiak, leaving V. G. Medvednikof in charge. By the summer of 1800, a large eight-cornered *kashim* (men's house) for the Aleut<sup>3</sup> hunters, temporary blacksmith shop, cook house, warehouse, cattle barn, and managers' residence were completed, and work on the stockade began. Over the course of the next two years, the Russians completed other buildings and started building a ship.<sup>4</sup>

Initial relations between the Tlingit and Russians appeared good, but became strained by the time Baranof left for Kodiak. The Russians arrested Tlingit and held them in irons, causing Tlingit unhappiness. Additionally, reports of Russians desecrating and robbing Tlingit graves and general exploitation of Tlingit hunting grounds strained the relationship.<sup>5</sup> Tensions also mounted when American traders and Tlingit from north and south of Sitka Sound advised the annihilation of the Russian fort.<sup>6\*</sup>

By mid June 1802, conditions were right for a Tlingit attack on the Russian fort. Most of the Aleut men were off hunting, leaving 21 Russians and a few Aleuts to maintain and guard the settlement. As many as 600 Tlingit warriors attacked the redoubt on June 18, killing all the Russian and Aleut inhabitants in the fort and burning the redoubt to the ground.

This sweeping Tlingit victory angered Baranof, who returned from Kodiak with a large force in 1804. After the Tlingit self-exiled from Sitka, Baranof reestablished his redoubt as New Archangel, centered on the promontory now known as Castle Hill in downtown Sitka.

## CUTTING PACKING COMPANY

The next intensive use of the Old Sitka area began in 1878 when the Cutting Packing Company of San Francisco erected a salmon packing cannery there. The cannery machinery was removed in 1882, and taken to the Kasilof River on the Kenai Peninsula. The next year, personnel from Sheldon Jackson College salvaged the remaining lumber from the cannery and used it to build the college's first structure.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The native Alaskans utilized by the Russians to hunt sea otters included Aleut (Unangan) from the lower Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutians, Alutiiq from Kodiak Island, and Chugach from Prince William Sound.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Betts, National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form: Old Sitka, (National Park Service, 2004), 6.

<sup>5</sup> Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, *The Battles of Sitka, 1802 and 1804, from Tlingit, Russian, and Other Points of View*, in *Russia in North America*, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario: Limestone Press, 1990), 7-8.

<sup>6</sup> P.A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company, Vol. 2, Documents*, edited by Richard A. Pierce and A. S. Donnelly (Kingston, Ontario: Limestone Press, 1979), 180-181.

\* Sources on the history of the battle of 1802 provide different accounts of what may have triggered the battle including those provided in this account. The exact causes cannot be determined with any level of certainty because the Tlingit did not keep written records of the event; what is known has been passed along by means of oral traditions.

<sup>7</sup> William S. Hanable, National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form: Old Sitka, (National Park Service, 1975), 2.

## TWENTIETH CENTURY SITE MEMORIALS AND EXCAVATION

This historic site and the surrounding region were included in the Tongass National Forest in February 1907. By 1910, five “Indian smokehouses” occupied the site;<sup>8</sup> by the mid 1930s, only one smokehouse and some gardens remained. In 1914, a Russian Orthodox priest, the Rev. Sergius (previously known as George Kostrometinoff), erected a cross on site and obtained a Special Use Permit from the Tongass National Forest to protect an acre of land for what he believed were the graves of the Russians and Aleut killed there in 1802.

In the mid 1930s, the Forest Service excavated the former Russian redoubt to determine the extent and location of the redoubt structures. The Emergency Conservation Works funded the excavations conducted by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC recovered more than 1000 artifacts from the excavations, most of Russian origin.<sup>9</sup> Post holes and artifact patterning suggested possible locations for the Russian buildings and stockade. By far, the most significant artifact discovered was the bronze “Possession Plate,” one of 30 given to the Shelikof- Golikov Company by the Russian Government to bury in newly claimed territories. This possession plate remains the only numbered Russian Possession Plate ever recovered.<sup>10</sup> Today, the plate is housed at the Sitka National Historical Park.

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE AND RECENT MODIFICATIONS

The U.S. Navy began developing the site in 1942 for use as barracks and storage depot, resulting in extensive grading and filling near the shoreline. In 1952, the Navy transferred the site to the Bureau of Land Management. The State of Alaska began administering the property in 1962. During the same year, the Secretary of the Interior declared Old Sitka a National Historic Landmark. The State of Alaska extended the Sitka Highway (now Halibut Point Road) in 1963, providing access to the site. In 1966, the State of Alaska developed the site as a historic park and wayside. Ownership of the National Historic Landmark and about 50 acres surrounding it was officially transferred to the State of Alaska in 1968. Modifications to the site included grading, landscaping, and construction of a gravel parking lot, as well as installation of interpretive signs and a flag pole. Improvements in the mid 1980s included upgrading the interpretive signs and buildings. The most recent modifications to the National Historic Landmark came in 1991 when the gravel parking lot was paved.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Anthony W. Barnett and Paul J. F. Schumacher, *An Analysis of the Archaeological Excavations by the U.S. Forest Service at Old Sitka*. (National Park Service, 1967), 7.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 29.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Betts, National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form: Old Sitka, (National Park Service, 2004), 13.

## CHAPTER 4: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ISSUES



## PRESERVATION ZONES

Preservation Zones are a new tool developed by DPOR to improve management of cultural resources and provide development guidance. These zones will guide site planning to ensure the characteristics that qualify for the property for listing as a National Historic Landmark are preserved to the greatest extent possible. Due to their recent development, no preservation zones currently exist at Old Sitka State Historical Park.

## RESEARCH

The primary research conducted at Old Sitka is related to archaeological excavations that occurred in the 1930s. The excavations, unfortunately, were conducted with less control or recordation than is standard for today, resulting in a large collection of artifacts and no written site report. The National Park Service attempted to fill this void with an analysis and summary of the collection in the 1960s.<sup>12</sup>

State Archaeological Survey personnel conducted an archaeological survey in 1978 at Old Sitka.<sup>13</sup> The survey included the examination of beaches, other surface exposures, and 15 subsurface tests. No additional cultural materials were encountered. Researchers borrowed some of the Old Sitka collections, but did not produce additional written reports.

## PARTNERSHIPS

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation currently has informal partnerships with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) regarding Old Sitka SHP, either because of shared history or adjacent properties. The artifacts excavated by the USFS in the 1930s are currently housed at the NPS curation facilities at Sitka National Historical Park. USFS, who previously managed the area that is now the park and who conducted the early archaeological excavations, manages the land directly adjacent to the northern boundary of Old Sitka SHP. The Forest and Muskeg Trail terminates on USFS land. Without agreements, permits or formal approval, USFS archaeologists periodically monitor Starrigavan Creek for archaeological remains and currently have artifacts from park land in their warehouse. ADF&G provided construction funding for the boat launch on the south side of the park.

## MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is currently conducted as needed by state park staff responsible for all park units in the Sitka area. The site caretaker, who resides seasonally at the Salmon House, actively maintains the lawn of Old Sitka National Historic Landmark. Trees and salmonberry bushes impact the viewshed between the battlefield site and the water and separate the lawn and the tidelands. Recently, park staff cleared some salmonberry bushes.

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<sup>12</sup> Anthony W. Barnett and Paul J.F. Schumacher, *An Analysis of the Archaeological Excavations by the U.S. Forest Service at Old Sitka*. (National Park Service, 1967).

<sup>13</sup> Douglas Reger, "Archaeological Survey: Old Sitka". Letter Report from to William S. Hanable, February 15, 1979.

## LAND USE AND FACILITIES

Old Sitka SHP consists of 51.3 acres, 3.16 acres of which are the Old Sitka National Historic Landmark. The park is used for historic interpretation, day use recreation, and boat launching. The sections of the park most significant for their cultural values are the Old Sitka National Historic Landmark and Starrigavan Creek. Cultural assets in these areas include the Salmon House, potential archaeological resources, battlefield, and viewsheds to the water. A large parking area consumes roughly 25% of the National Historic Landmark severely compromising the site's integrity.

Structural remains of Redoubt St. Michael are long gone, but the importance of the site is captured in the location, setting, views, feeling of reverence, and information the site contained currently housed at the Sitka National Historical Park. Picnic areas are scattered throughout the National Historic Landmark and near the beach. A campfire ring is situated near the water by the Salmon House. Access to the beach from Old Sitka is limited and does not comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

The Salmon House—a historic building in its own right, but a non-contributing component of Old Sitka National Historic Landmark—is located between the battlefield site and the boat launch. The Salmon House is currently occupied by the Old Sitka SHP caretaker. The primary issues at the house are pests (rodents, bugs, and bears), moisture, and site drainage. Moisture is causing rot of the siding and porch. The paint layer is not sound and needs immediate attention to protect the siding. The gutters are warped, filled with debris, and overall performing poorly. The storage shed located in the rear of the Salmon House is positioned so water is directed towards the Salmon House in a narrow area with inadequate air circulation to speed up drying times. The bathroom addition is clad in T1-11 with a flat roof, and is not appropriately designed as an addition.

Areas outside the main cultural area include the boat launch, overflow parking and natural area. The natural area is home to one trail developed in cooperation with the USFS. The boat launch and overflow parking area are heavily used. Access to the historical portion of the park is not clearly identified. In many regards, the historical portion of the park and the natural area are operated as two distinct areas rather than one comprehensive unit. A fee station and restrooms are located near the boat launch.

## INTERPRETATION

The following paragraphs provide a summary of current personal and non-personal interpretation in and about the park. **Personal interpretation** occurs when one person is interpreting to another, such as during a guided tour. **Non-personal interpretation** occurs when the person interpreting is removed and replaced with another type of media, such as an interpretive display, audio tour, or self-guided brochure.

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### PERSONAL INTERPRETATION

#### SITKA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Sitka Historical Museum, located in Centennial Hall, provides visitors with information and stories about a variety of displays and artifacts about Sitka's Tlingit, Russian, and American history. The museum's staff uses a detailed diorama of Russian Sitka circa 1867 to verbally interpret the story of:

- the early struggles between the Tlingit and invading Russians, including the battles of 1802 and 1804
- everyday life in Russian Sitka for the different cultural groups that lived there, including Tlingit, Europeans, Aleut, and others

## SITKA TRIBAL ENTERPRISES

The Sitka Tribal Enterprises' *Rainforest Hike and Coach Tour* takes visitors on a seven-mile drive along the shoreline to the National Historic Landmark at Old Sitka SHP during which the guide interprets Sitka's history and local landmarks. After this beautiful drive, visitors hike through a variety of ecological habitats on the Starrigavan Muskeg Trail.

While Old Sitka is the stop at the end of the coach part of this tour, the Sitka Tribal Enterprises tour guides do not feel that their people's story is properly told in the existing interpretive panels of this site. What the tour guides present is often in stark contrast to what the panels describe.

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## NON-PERSONAL INTERPRETATION

### SITKA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Sitka Historical Museum's diorama, which museum staff members use to tell the story of Sitka including the battles of 1802 and 1804, is one of the museum's most popular interpretive displays. The museum also has an extensive collection of Tlingit baskets, as well as Russian documents, artifacts, and reports pertaining to all stages of Sitka's history, including Old Sitka's period of significance. Serving the community year round, the museum distributes a walking tour map that guides visitors to Sitka's National Historic Landmarks and other key attractions.

### INTERPRETIVE PANELS

There are nine spots for interpretive panels in the interpretive open area— the area designated a National Historic Landmark; three panels are currently missing. Two of the unoccupied spots have been used for bulletin boards.

The six existing panels were designed and fabricated via the silk screening process, a technology that has not been used by the division since the early 1990s. The panels are in poor condition with watermarks, scratches, and holes prevalent. The information presented on the displays is inadequate to present the site's complete story and is considered offensive to the Sitka Native community.

The following list provides a brief description of the existing interpretive panels:

1. *Soft Gold* describes the development of international trade from the 15<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the discovery of sea otter pelts and their high value in Chinese markets, and trade routes.
2. *Russians Arrive* depicts the how, when, and why the Russians arrived in Sitka and what they intended to accomplish in Russian America.
3. *Sitka* gives visitors a snapshot of Sitka history viewed through the lens of Russians claiming ownership of Sitka and identifying their primary interest in the area.
4. *Face to Face* touches on the somewhat hostile convergence of Russians, Aleuts, and Tlingit in the hunt and trade of sea otter.
5. *Redoubt Life* explores the lifestyle of the Russians and Aleuts stationed at Redoubt St. Michael, including Aleut hunters keeping the settlement fed, and settlers trading with the local Tlingit people who began to resent the Russian attempts to control area trade.
6. *Clash of Cultures* describes the battle of 1802 between the Tlingit and the Redoubt settlers, explores the cultural differences that could have lead to the battle, and tells visitors about the battle's outcomes.

## SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETIVE TOUR BROCHURE

A self-guided interpretive tour brochure, developed in partnership by ADPOR and USFS, explores the muskeg ecosystem and discusses the forest vegetation along Old Sitka’s Forest and Muskeg Trail and the Estuary Life Trail; the Estuary Life Trail is part of the Starrigavan Recreation Area in the Tongass National Forest. The brochure includes a map of the trail system, individual trail descriptions and levels of difficulty, as well as amenities and points of interest such as restrooms, viewing decks, and parking areas.

### PARK STAFF

Old Sitka SHP is one of 42 state park units within the Southeast area of the Alaska State Park system, which covers the Alaska panhandle. There are eight Sitka area park units, including Old Sitka SHP. A Park Specialist manages these park units with the help of an Alaska Conservation Corps (ACC) employee and volunteers; this limited staff structure makes it difficult to provide personal contact with visitors. However, of the eight units, two are more likely to have a greater personal presence—Halibut Point State Recreation Site (SRS) and Old Sitka SHP. The Sitka state parks’ office is located at Halibut Point SRS, and the Salmon House at Old Sitka SHP intermittently houses volunteers.

The staff housing in the Salmon House is a potential point of contention, as the employee residing there may not be fully able to abandon his park duties at the end of the day. Visitors view this employee as a representative of Alaska State Parks whether he or she is “on the clock” or “off the clock.” The employee is so compelled to always act in a professional manner while on site, even though the division does not require staff members or volunteers to work more than eight hours a day. The house itself and the surrounding area is public property, but since the house is used as living quarters for staff and volunteers, visitors are not permitted access inside the house. Visitors are not encouraged to use this part of the park due to the proximity of it to the Salmon House and maintenance equipment.

## CHAPTER 5: PRESERVATION AND INTERPRETATION STRATEGIES



The following strategies for preservation and interpretation of Old Sitka State Historical Park will assist managers in meeting the plan’s stated goals and objectives.

## PRESERVATION ZONES

A critical strategy for achieving the plan’s goals and objectives is the development and implementation of preservation zones. The establishment of preservation zones is intended to improve understanding and provide clear guidance for the interpretation and preservation treatments of historic resources.

### ESTABLISH PRESERVATION ZONES

Preservation zones enable managers to better facilitate continued preservation, development, program expansion, visitor growth, and general enjoyment of Old Sitka SHP. If land-use designations are established at a future date as part of a management planning process, the preservation zones will be supplementary and will not supersede the land-use designations. In the absence of a management plan, park staff, design professionals, park management, and the public should closely follow the building- and area-specific recommendations related to historic preservation and interpretation associated with the preservation zones.

Short  
Range  
Priority

Only two preservation zones are pertinent to Old Sitka SHP—Zone One and Zone Four. Each zone has a unique preservation objective related to the buildings, landscape, archaeology, and interpretation. These objectives should be used to guide decisions in each zone, while making sure to meet the preservation and interpretation objectives of this plan (see Figure 1).

### PRESERVATION ZONE ONE

*Preservation Zone One* at Old Sitka is anchored by the Old Sitka National Historic Landmark. The area includes the parking lot, picnic area, beach, and interpretative area. The views from the existing interpretive area to the ocean should be restored and protected. The overall goal for this area is to enhance the visitor experience through restoration of the historic viewshed. This zone is established to protect important characteristics that currently exist at the site. Reconstruction of the redoubt or any buildings is not envisioned as part of this plan.

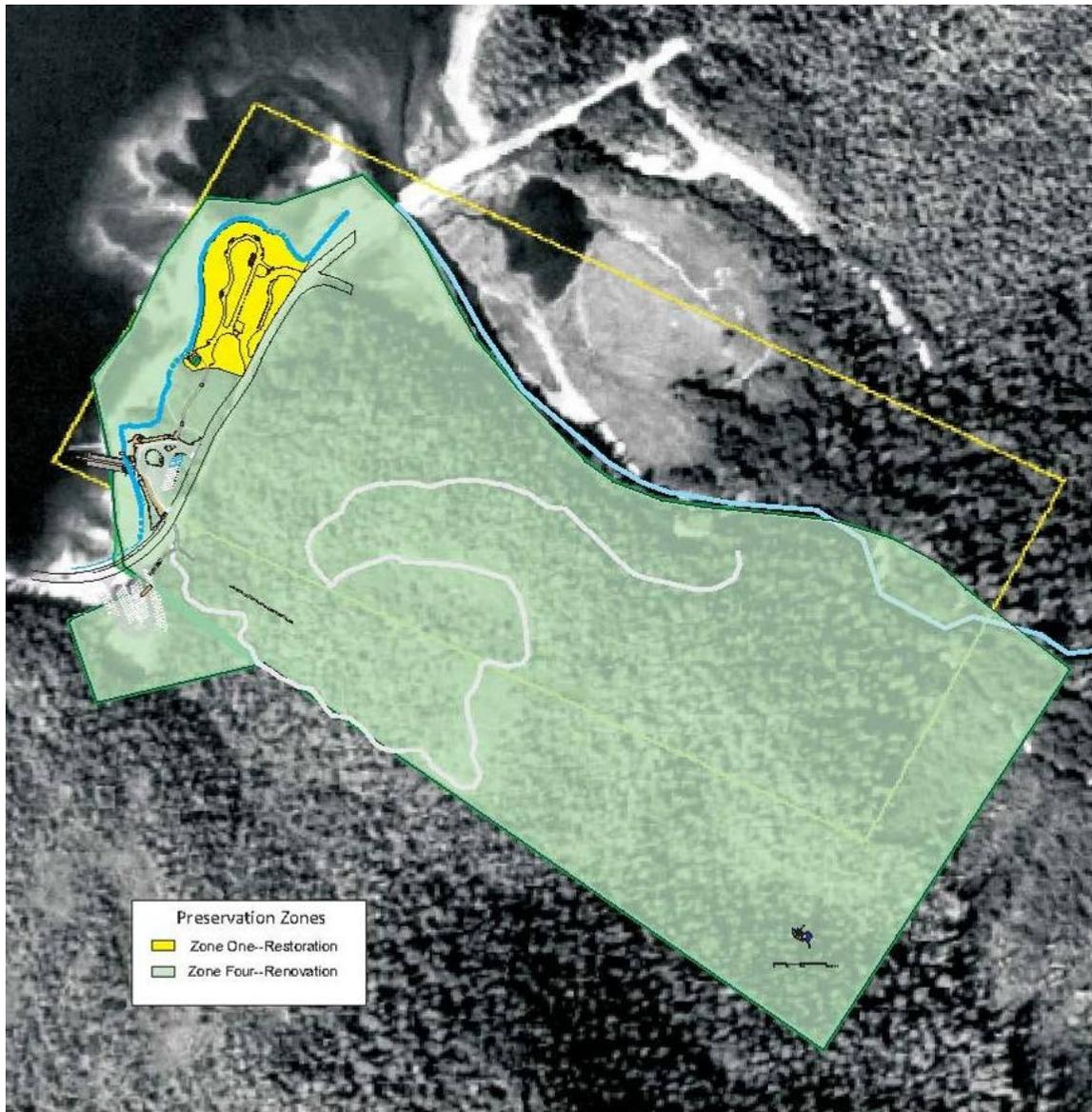
**The primary preservation treatment in Preservation Zone One is restoration.** Cultural assets in this zone represent important historical functionality of the historic resource, are critical to the visitor experience and understanding of the resource, embody distinctive qualities (such as unique materials, features, details, or craftsmanship), or achieve additional significance due to associations with important people, styles of architecture or events. All resources in Preservation Zone One should be maintained, preserved, and protected as the highest priority. Work that takes place in Zone One should closely follow the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Restoration* and use the period of 1802 to guide decisions (see Appendix A). The overall definition of restoration is “*the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.*” The Restoration Standards are attached in Appendix A.

### PRESERVATION ZONE FOUR

The area outside the National Historic Landmark is classified as *Preservation Zone Four*. Areas inside Zone Four include the Forest & Muskeg Trail, boat launch area, and wooded areas across the Halibut Point Road. Although renovation in this area is appropriate, preservation of all documented historic properties is a priority. Proper siting of new features is of utmost importance to preserve what exists while making

accommodations to keep the area useable. This zone can accommodate new facilities that are larger in scale although the views from Old Sitka should not be interrupted.

**The primary treatment in Preservation Zone Four areas is renovation.** Preservation Zone Four consists of those areas where changes will not sufficiently diminish the historic character of the property as a whole. Modification, renovation, and intrusion are acceptable. However, additions must still be sympathetic to the historic nature of the park. Preservation Zone Four areas can accommodate more changes than other designated zones. Zone Four areas are often undistinguished or repetitive in nature unless they represent a part of a larger ensemble of features, or are closely associated with other more significant site features.



**Figure 1:** Preservation Zone Map

## RESEARCH

Systematic research will further guide resource management decisions, create better interpretive possibilities, more accurately depict historic resources, and provide a framework to conduct archaeological investigations.

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## SURVEY

An archaeological survey including sub-surface testing should be conducted in the area east of Halibut Point Road. Disturbed burials, possibly located in this area, were reported in the late 1800's.<sup>14</sup> Particular attention should be paid to the point just east of the National Historic Landmark and the dryer forested areas overlooking Starrigavan Bay and the Starrigavan River Valley. This survey may discover intact Russian or Tlingit cultural deposits not destroyed by 20<sup>th</sup> century construction, as well as identify areas of archaeological interest that may require more sensitive management. All surveys should be coordinated with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska. This survey may include public involvement as part of a public archaeology program.

*Short-Mid  
Range  
Priority*

The tidally isolated "island" may contain undisturbed cultural materials. Subsurface testing should be considered for this location, possibly as part of another survey and testing program.

One of the major unknowns about Old Sitka SHP is how much of the site has been disturbed by 20<sup>th</sup> century excavation and filling. It is possible that ground penetrating radar or other remote sensing technology might be able to determine what ground has been disturbed and what areas hold the possibility of undisturbed cultural deposits. The division should encourage this procedure in the future if the opportunity arises.

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## CONFERENCES

Division personnel involved in research at Old Sitka SHP should consider participating in historical conferences, particularly those dealing with Russian America, Russian colonization, colonial battlefields, etc. This would provide the opportunity to emphasize research conducted at Old Sitka SHP, and to highlight the site as part of a regional tour or for actual on-site archaeological testing.

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

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## PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY

The division will promote and support public archaeology as a means of educating the public about the history of Old Sitka SHP and the value of archaeological research. Public archaeology programs should, when feasible, be structured to involve members of the community in surveying, mapping, and excavating, with all activities resulting in reports filed with ADPOR. Local agencies, tribal representatives and archaeologists should be encouraged to participate in archaeological excavations.

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Betts, National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form: Old Sitka, (National Park Service, 2004), 8.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Documented and informal partnerships would benefit programs and maintenance activities at Old Sitka. A degree of formalization is necessary so relationships between entities are known when people or priorities change in organizations.

### EDUCATION PARTNERS

Educational partners can assist in expanding programming, increasing educational opportunities, and nurturing research activities year round. Potential education partners include:

- Alaska Pacific University
- Alaska Private & Home Educators Association
- Mount Edgecumbe High School
- National Park Service, Sitka National Historical Park
- Sheldon Jackson Museum
- Sitka School District
- U.S. Forest Service
- University of Alaska Fairbanks
- University of Alaska Southeast

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

### PROMOTIONAL OUTREACH PARTNERS

Partnerships specifically formed in an effort to promote the park and its historical resources are encouraged. Potential partners include tourist organizations, local government, and media. In addition to marketing at the local level, the division should look to potential statewide and national audiences. Potential promotional partners include:

- Alaska Cruise Association
- Alaska Travel Industry Association
- Sitka Chamber of Commerce
- Sitka Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Sitka Historical Society
- Sitka Tribe

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

### MAINTENANCE PARTNERS

ADPOR will attempt to expand and develop maintenance partnerships with organizations, institutions, and agencies. Partnerships will help ADPOR keep Old Sitka SHP clean, safe, well maintained and build the feeling of ownership in the community. Potential maintenance partners could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Commercial entities
- Sitka Historical Society
- Sitka Tribe

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

## RESEARCH PARTNERS

Research partners could help increase knowledge and survey and analysis funding opportunities for the park. Potential partners include agencies, institutions, organizations, and private researchers, including:

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Pacific University
- National Park Service, Sitka National Historical Park
- Private Researchers
- Sitka Historical Society
- Sitka Tribe
- U.S. Forest Service
- University of Alaska Fairbanks
- University of Alaska Southeast

## MAINTENANCE

### SITE MAINTENANCE

Old Sitka SHP should be clear from refuse at all times. Staff should routinely empty garbage cans and ensure the site is refuse free. Bear proof containers are appropriate for this location due to the high frequency of bears and to avoid fostering problematic bear behavior. Personal belongings of staff members must be stored out of public view near the Salmon House to preserve its historic character and ensure visitors feel welcomed at the park facility. Maintenance equipment should be stored in the shed behind the Salmon House. Staff vehicles should be parked at the boat launch parking lot.

*Short  
Range  
Priority*



**Figure 2:** Old Sitka National Historic Landmark Historical Viewshed

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## VEGETATION CONTROL

Vegetation has the potential to impact the visitor experience, the historic views and vistas, structural integrity of the Salmon House, and the integrity of archaeological features at Old Sitka; thus, vegetation should be controlled. Historic views to the ocean are significant to understanding the battles that took place at the site. The primary viewshed areas are depicted in **Figure 2**. Salmonberry in the primary viewshed must be removed or maintained in a way that re-establishes the historic relationship between the land and water to understand how Tlingit boats approached the Russian redoubt. Large trees that do not impede the visual relationship can remain to sustain the park's natural character and combat soil erosion.

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE MONITORING

The beach and stream bank should be surveyed every spring and autumn by park personnel for collection and curation of artifacts that may have eroded out of the bank during the winter and summer. The beach, intertidal area, and riverbanks should be monitored for Russian, Tlingit and Aleut artifacts; if any such artifacts in the areas are located, GPS coordinates should be taken and the resource should be recovered and recorded for dating using the Old Sitka State Historical Park Archaeological Monitoring Form (Appendix B).

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

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## CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Any rehabilitation or restoration of a historic property should start with a complete condition assessment. Condition assessments must be completed prior to commencement of work on any building or site and reconsidered every five years. A completed condition assessment will provide adequate information to prioritize work on specific resources and the urgency of the repairs. Thorough digital photo documentation must accompany all reports. Photos should be taken that capture each elevation, significant preservation issues, significant features and the setting. A standard condition assessment inventory form is included in Appendix C. A condition assessment form should be completed for each historic resource at Old Sitka SHP and submitted to the Architectural Historian in OHA. The two resources that currently require condition assessment at Old Sitka SHP are the Salmon House and Old Sitka National Historic Landmark.

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

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## SALMON HOUSE

The Salmon House should be appropriately maintained and serviced to represent the division to the public. In the future, the Salmon House should be considered as a visitor contact facility for Alaska State Parks in Sitka. The grounds should be well maintained and may be used for visitor services such as picnicking and visitor contact station when the Salmon House is no longer needed to house staff.

*Long  
Range  
Priority*

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties* must be followed when improvements and maintenance are conducted at the Salmon House. General maintenance that must be conducted at the Salmon House includes removing organic growth, painting, gutter repair cleaning, and pest control.

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

Other substantial changes should be made to the Salmon House to preserve its historic integrity, such as providing appropriate separation between the shed and the Salmon House. The bathroom addition should be fit with a roofline that reflects the historic building's character. Cladding that closely resembles the Salmon House should be installed on the bathroom addition. Tanks should be visually separated from

*Long  
Range  
Priority*

the house, or appropriately screened with vegetation or structures. If parking at the Salmon House is needed, it should be sympathetically sited to ensure the integrity of the building is preserved.

## LAND USE AND FACILITIES

### PARKING LOTS

Two of the three parking areas at Old Sitka are appropriately placed. However, changes to the parking area located in the Old Sitka National Historic Landmark core need to occur to better manage the resource. Ideally, the parking area should be removed from the National Historic Landmark to restore the visual characteristics, and improve the site's historic integrity and a sense of reverence.

*Long  
Range  
Priority*

If the need for this parking area is demonstrated, screening should be considered while preserving the visual relationship to the mountains. One option could include a gently tapered berm with low-growing vegetation to block the view of parked cars, while still allowing an uninterrupted view of the mountains. Some parking spaces may be lost to accommodate such a screening element.

### TRAILS

Old Sitka SHP has two maintained trails, a boat launch access trail and a forest trail (Forest and Muskeg Trail). To better facilitate visitor access from the boat launch parking lot to the Old Sitka National Historic Landmark, the trail should be adequately identified and signed.

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

### PICNIC AREAS

All picnic areas should be located outside the primary viewshed areas and not on the beach. There are a number of wooded areas that could accommodate secluded individual picnic sites, in addition to a site near the Salmon House. These appropriately placed sites will sustain the primary viewshed area, interpretation, and sense of reverence desired.

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

### EROSION CONTROL

Erosion control must be based on sound evidence. To gain this evidence, erosion datums (steel rebar with aluminum caps) should be put in place as reference points for annual monitoring. Datums, at a minimum, should be marked with "Erosion Datum," the year, and distance to the edge of the eroded soil face. Yearly erosion monitoring should take place to assess the amount of annual loss. Depending on the severity of the erosion, measures should be taken to ensure stabilization of the Old Sitka National Historic Landmark. Any erosion control measures taken must be sensitive to the natural landscape and nature of the resource. Measures must appear to be natural.

*Long  
Range  
Priority*

### MEMORIALS

The proposal of new memorials is common at battlefield sites. Proposals for new memorials must go through appropriate permitting which may include, but is not limited to acquiring a special use permit from the Southeast Area superintendent.

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

New memorials must be kept to a minimum to preserve and protect the visual integrity of the site. All memorials must relate to the battle that took place at Old Sitka. Memorials to individuals are not

appropriate for this site. New memorials need to be accompanied by an appropriately funded endowment for future maintenance of the memorial.

Ultimately, the chief of the Office of History and Archaeology, the Southeast Area superintendent, and the director of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation must agree to the placement of any new memorial and any one of them has the authority to reject the request for a new memorial.

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## ENTRANCE SIGNS

The *Kiks.ádi* place name for Old Sitka, *Gájaa Héen*, should be added to all entrance signs to the site. In the short term, new smaller wood signs could be attached above or below the existing signs reading “*Gájaa Héen*”. In the future, when signs are replaced, *Gájaa Héen* should be included in the entrance sign while maintaining the official name of the state historic site.

Mid  
Range  
Priority

## INTERPRETATION

Interpretation is meant to enhance a visitor’s experience by revealing what makes the site or resource significant, and is a valuable management tool because it “... forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the [visitors] and meanings inherent in the resources”<sup>15</sup> prompting an appreciation of the resources that fosters stewardship. Interpretation at Old Sitka will not only tell visitors what is significant about the site but also aim to help visitors understand the park’s value as part of the heritage of Alaska and the United States, to encourage preservation, and to instill a sense of community ownership in the park.

The following section outlines interpretive themes and the division’s recommendations for personal and non-personal interpretation.

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## INTERPRETIVE THEMES

**THEMES** are the primary messages visitors should understand about a particular interpretive site or presentation. Themes bring a sense of continuity to a site and assist planners when organizing the content for interpretive materials. Each interpretive product developed will support the primary interpretive theme and one of the subthemes listed below.

### PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME:

Old Sitka, or *Gajaa Héen*, is the site of a battle that was fought between Russians and Tlingit and was a defining event in the history of Sitka and Alaska. Visitors to Old Sitka State Historical Park are presented with a unique educational opportunity enhanced by the site’s historical importance and natural setting.

### SUBTHEMES:

1. The Tlingit inhabited Southeast Alaska and flourished there for thousands of years; they used the site called *Gajaa Héen*, now Old Sitka, as a fish drying camp before the Russians arrived.

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<sup>15</sup> National Association for Interpretation, Definition Project, “Definition of Interpretation”, [http://www.definitionsproject.com/definitions/def\\_full\\_term.cfm](http://www.definitionsproject.com/definitions/def_full_term.cfm) (Accessed July 22, 2010).

- a. The Sitka Tlingit took fish from the ocean and from the stream that is now called Starrigavan and dried them here for winter use.
2. The Russian-American Company held a monopoly over the northeast area of the Pacific Ocean for hunting and trading when the fur trade proved to be highly lucrative.
  - a. The Shelikhov-Golikov Company was one of the most powerful Russian fur trade companies and it later became the government sponsored Russian-American Company under Shelikhov.
  - b. Baranof, the first Chief Manager of the Russian-American Company, set out to accomplish the difficult task of establishing permanent trading posts along the North American Pacific coast.
3. The Aleuts were the first group of people the Russians encountered in Alaska and, along with Alutiiq and Chugach people, played a key role in the Russians' success in Alaska.
  - a. The Russians used both friendly and hostile tactics to ensure that the Native peoples they encountered in Alaska including Aleuts, Alutiiq, and Chugach would hunt for them.
  - b. The Alaskan Natives who were compelled to help the Russians knew how to thrive in Alaska—a land that can be cruel to the unprepared. Their people had developed skills and technology that allowed them to not only survive, but also live quite comfortably.
  - c. The Native hunters, probably mostly Alutiiq and a few Aleut and Chugach, and a few Native women accompanied the Russians to Sitka and helped them establish Redoubt St. Michael.
4. In 1799, Baranof established a trading post near present-day Sitka in order to tap into an abundance of sea otters; the resulting settlement was Redoubt St. Michael.
  - a. Tlingit leaders gave Baranof and the Russians permission to build a fort and establish a trading post at *Gajaa Héen* in exchange for trading goods and, for a period, both Tlingit and Russians strove to maintain a harmonious existence.
  - b. Baranof returned to Kodiak in the spring of 1800 and left Medvednikov in charge of Redoubt St. Michael with strict orders to maintain peaceful relations with the local Tlingit and to be careful not to give motive for quarrel.<sup>16</sup>
5. Growing resentment and hostility towards the Russians and those with them eventually escalated to the formation of multi-clan alliance against the Russians that finally resulted in battle.
  - a. A few of the Russian company may have acted with disregard to their superiors' orders and insulted the Tlingit, fueling growing distrust and resentment. Trade advantages, traditional enmity with the Native people in the Russian group, and discomfort with a permanent Russian settlement on traditionally Tlingit land may have also fueled hostilities.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Dauenhauer, Nora Marks, Richard Dauenhauer and Lydia T. Black, *Anóoshi Lingít Aaní Ká: Russians in Tlingit America: The Battles of Sitka 1802 and 1804*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Institute, 2008), XXVIII-XXIX.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIX-XXXIV.

- b. The leaders of the local Tlingit began secretly preparing for war while maintaining a friendly appearance.
  - c. A helmet, or war bonnet, resembling a raven was made by the southern people—the *Kiks.ádi*'s grandparents—and sent to the *Kiks.ádi* of Sitka in show of support for war.<sup>18</sup>
- 6. In mid-June 1802<sup>19</sup>, the Tlingit assailed the fort at noon in a two-pronged attack, one group attacking the fort from the ocean and another from the forest behind the fort.
  - a. The settlers of Redoubt St. Michael, both Russian and Aleut, were taken by surprise by the Tlingit attack; the Tlingit had given the Russians no indication that they were no longer on peaceful terms.
  - b. According to Tlingit oral tradition, the first person to die in this battle was the Russian blacksmith. The Tlingit warrior, Katlean, took the blacksmith's hammer and used it as his primary weapon in the battle.
  - c. The Tlingit burned the two-story barracks to the ground and killed the settlers of Redoubt St. Michael who could not escape, thoroughly defeating the Russians.
- 7. A few Russians and Aleuts managed to escape during the Tlingit attack, but most survivors were outside the fort fishing or hunting when the battle occurred, or were taken captive to become slaves to the Tlingit.
  - a. Captain Barber negotiated with the Tlingit for the survivors held captive after a Russian and some Aleut women that had escaped made contact with his ship. He also took survivors collected by two British ships that happened to be nearby—the *Globe* and the *Alert*.
  - b. Captain Barber returned the survivors that he collected from his negotiations with the Tlingit and from two American ships, the *Alert* and the *Globe*, to Baranov at Kodiak in exchange for additional sea otter pelts.<sup>20</sup>
- 8. Baranof lost trusted employees and friends and any sort of control over the Sitka area fur trade in the Battle of 1802. Also, the loss of the redoubt at Old Sitka could have endangered other established Russian posts should war have broken out between the British and Russians. Therefore, he prepared to counterattack and retake the lost territory.<sup>21</sup>
  - a. In 1804, Baranof returned for battle and, after a six-day siege, the Tlingit ran out of ammunition. They left quietly during the night on a self-imposed exile.<sup>22</sup>
  - b. A new Russian trading post was established at present-day Sitka and it was named New Archangel.
  - c. The Russian-American Company built their new fort on Castle Hill that became the new headquarters for the Russian-American Company. Sitka became the capital of Russian Alaska soon after.

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 118, 158, 159, 164,

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 176, 183.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 185-189, 203, 205-207.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, XXXIV-XXXV.

<sup>22</sup> Lisianskii 1812, in Dauenhauer et al. 2008, pp.231-233.

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## PERSONAL INTERPRETATION

Personal interpretation occurs when one person is interpreting to another. Authors Lisa Brochu and Tim Merriam provide an excellent summation of personal interpretation in their book, “Personal Interpretation: connecting your audience to heritage resources”:

*“Personal interpretation is one of the most powerful approaches to interpretation because the interpreter can continually adapt to each audience. If you are practicing personal interpretation, the opportunities for you to make emotional and intellectual connections are numerous, because you can learn about the guest and apply what you learn to enhance her or his experience. However, personal interpretive services are usually available for a limited amount of time each day and perform variably, depending upon the skill of the interpreter and how she or he feels at any given time. And personal interpretation is usually more expensive than nonpersonal approaches, when one considers the cost per visitor contact.”<sup>23</sup>*

### SITKA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Sitka Historical Museum plays a central role in personal interpretation related to the events that took place at Old Sitka. The division recommends working with the Sitka Historical Museum to develop—using the interpretive themes described herein—a personal interpretation guide (described below) to assist museum and park volunteers in sharing Old Sitka’s stories with visitors.

Mid  
Range  
Priority

### PERSONAL INTERPRETATION GUIDE

To assist tour guides, volunteers, and park employees when sharing the history of Old Sitka with visitors and school groups, ADPDR should develop a concise guide to interpret Old Sitka National Historic Landmark. Ideally, the guide will provide direction for personal interpretation of Old Sitka and ensure that the park’s major theme and subthemes are adequately and effectively presented to the interested public. The guide will briefly develop each of the subthemes and provide examples and suggestions for creating a positive interpretive experience for park visitors.

Mid  
Range  
Priority

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## NON-PERSONAL INTERPRETATION

Non-personal interpretation occurs when the person interpreting is removed and replaced with another type of media, such as an interpretive display, audio tour, or self-guided brochure. At Old Sitka, non-personal interpretation will enhance visitors’ experiences when they are visiting the park independent of a tour, when the Sitka Historical Society and Museum is closed, or outside scheduled times for oral presentations, either at the park or the museum. Non-personal interpretation presents a consistent story and message and is not susceptible to a guide’s skill or feelings on any particular day, as described in the “Personal Interpretation” section.

The following descriptions present recommendations for the following types of projects: on-site displays, a self-guided interpretive tour brochure, podcasts, and cell phone interpretation.

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<sup>23</sup>Brochu, *Personal Interpretation: connecting your audience to heritage resources*, 23.

## ON-SITE INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS

On-site, static interpretation will be the primary media for interpretation in the park. The following project descriptions are both site and topic specific. **Note:** The project numbers do not correspond with implementation priority.

*Project #1: Interpretive Shelter.....National Historic Landmark Area*

*Project #2: Type D Interpretive Panels..... National Historic Landmark Area*

*Project #3: Historical Feature Panel.....Salmon House*

### *Project #1: Interpretive Shelter—Interpretive Open Area (National Historic Landmark)*

The interpretive shelter, located in the open area, the National Historic Landmark near the parking area, would present—through static interpretive exhibits—the park’s historical context and the background for the battle of 1802. The recommended facility would be a covered shelter with an estimated four, Type-D interpretive displays. Three of these would introduce the visitor to the distinct parties involved in the battle of 1802 and provide the background for the battle of 1802. One panel would orient the visitor to the site and provide information on the park’s highlights. The panels should have identifiable, thematic graphic elements.

Short  
Range  
Priority

### *Project #2: Type D Interpretive Panels—Interpretive Open Area (National Historic Landmark)*

Three Type D panels are recommended along the outer edge of the interpretive open area where visitors can read the panel and look out over the bay—the positioning would enable visitors to envision what the site was like in 1802. These panels will interpret the battle itself, the events that lead to the battle, the story of the survivors, and the aftermath including the battle of 1804. They may also depict Redoubt St. Michael to allow visitors the chance to imagine what is left of the original site as it was that fateful day.

Short  
Range  
Priority

### *Project #3: Historical Feature Panel—Salmon House*

It is recommended that a panel be installed near the building that is known as the Salmon House, or the Russian Tea House, to interpret its historical significance, which is not related to the rest of the site, and its importance to the people of Sitka who saved it from being destroyed and asked that it be placed in the park for safekeeping.

Long  
Range  
Priority

## SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETIVE TOUR BROCHURE

The existing self-guided interpretive tour brochure developed by the division and the U.S. Forest Service, was developed in 1995 and is still adequate. However, the U.S. Forest Service no longer uses this brochure and has replaced the markers with small, low-to-the-ground panels that convey messages about the surrounding environment to the visitors. The division recommends either 1) switching out the brochure for panels similar to those at the U.S. Forest Service site or 2) redoing the brochure to deal specifically with Old Sitka SHP (though the map should continue to show the U.S. Forest Service side of the trail).

Mid  
Range  
Priority

### OPTION NO. 1—REPLACE BROCHURE WITH PANELS

If this option is pursued, the division recommends partnering with the U.S. Forest Service to ensure that the panels to be placed on the portion of the trail in Old Sitka SHP preserve a sense of flow and continuity throughout the entire trail. The panels should be placed higher off the ground to ensure that they are visible throughout the year and not buried in snow during the winter. It is also recommended that, while

a sense of graphic and contextual continuity with the Forest Service panels should be conserved, the symbols currently used in the markers from the self-guided interpretive tour brochure be incorporated into the panel design. Self-guided interpretive tour brochures could then be made available in other languages such as Japanese, Russian, German, French, Spanish, and Tlingit to broaden the accessibility of the park's interpretive materials to a greater percentage of the park visitors. The symbols retained in the panels would serve as markers for these brochures in other languages.

## OPTION NO. 2—UPDATE BROCHURE

If this option is pursued, the updated brochure should follow the standard design developed by the division. The recommendation to develop the brochure in other languages applies to this option as well.

## OTHER SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR OPTIONS

Possibilities for self-guided tours, in addition to the interpretive self-guided tour brochure or the interpretive panels on the trail, include cell phone interpretation and podcasts. The division recommends that the current markers, which are in good overall condition, be used as markers for cell phone interpretation and podcasts if they are kept for use with an updated brochure. If the markers are replaced with panels, the above recommendation to retain the marker's symbols in the panels design could be adapted to use for podcast and cell phone interpretation as well.

## OLD SITKA STATE HISTORICAL PARK BROCHURE

A brochure for Old Sitka State Historical Park would highlight the park's historical background and include orientation information. The brochure should be designed to match Alaska State Parks' standard design, thus creating a product that is easily identifiable. Standard graphic elements such as font choice, border treatment, and the order in which information is displayed tie all Alaska State Park brochures together.

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

The map portion of the brochure would show the layout of the park and the location of park features such as the Forest and Muskeg Trail, the National Historic Landmark, the Salmon House, picnic areas, parking areas, and toilets. The brochure would be available for download from the division website and be distributed at various locations in Sitka.

## SITKA AREA HISTORIC SITES OR NHL BROCHURE

The division recommends partnering with other parties that are interested in preserving Sitka's history such as the Sitka Historical Society, National Park Service, and the City and Borough Sitka to create an interpretive brochure that focuses on Sitka's historical sites or NHLs, including those that are part of the Alaska state park system. If another agency or interested party begins to work on a similar project, the division recommends encouraging and supporting the effort.

*Mid  
Range  
Priority*

## PODCASTS

Podcasts are digital recordings made available for downloading to a personal computer, iPod, MP3 player, or other personal audio devices. It is recommended that podcasts be made available on the ADPOR state website for visitors to download onto their personal audio devices. Recommended topics for podcasts include an audio version of the self-guided tour brochure, and audio versions of interpretive panels. Additional stories pertaining to the site could also be interpreted for park visitors in this manner. It is recommended that podcasts be made available in multiple languages.

*Mid-Long  
Range  
Priority*

## CELL PHONE INTERPRETATION

Cell phone interpretation could be a valuable tool to enhance accessibility of the park's interpretive programs. Further research into the applicability and practicality of this mode of interpretation in Old Sitka is recommended. Cell phone coverage throughout the park, public opinion, demographics, and cost are some factors that must be considered.

*Long  
Range  
Priority*

### PARK STAFF

The division recommends that a staff person or a combination of staff persons who meet the criteria listed below be employed to meet the needs particular to Old Sitka SHP.

Desired qualifications:

- Ability to effectively communicate interpretive messages about the park's archaeological, cultural, and natural resources to visitors
- Understanding of preservation strategies for historic landscapes or battlefields
- Law enforcement capabilities to enhance visitor safety and deter vandalism
- Understanding of the cultural and historical significance of this park
- Knowledge of the story of Old Sitka, especially the story of the Battle of 1802
- Basic knowledge of the area's wildlife and ecology

The division recommends that staff members responsible for overseeing and managing this park perform duties such as the following as needed:

- Regularly thin out and cut back vegetation along the trails and in the National Historic Landmark
- Ensure that all applicable federal, state, and local laws are followed within the park
- Address safety hazards as needed
- Provide personal interpretation for park visitors

### INTERNSHIPS AND ALASKA CONSERVATION CORPS

The division recommends offering internships or Alaska Conservation Corps (ACC) positions to high school and college students. The interns or ACCs could carry out general maintenance activities, conduct research on Old Sitka history and archaeology and preservation technologies, conduct interpretive tours, and provide personal interpretation to park visitors depending on the intern or ACC's interests, abilities, and field of study. Offering internships or ACC positions to Alaskan students provides the division with an opportunity to help further the education of Alaskan youth and provide them with work experience. The hired students would, in turn, help the division provide improved services to the public.

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

### VOLUNTEERS IN THE PARK

The division recommends the continued use of volunteers in the park to assist park staff in certain park projects. Park staff should identify volunteer opportunities and conduct outreach programs in the community to fill volunteer needs. Volunteer opportunities could include trail maintenance, vegetation control, personal interpretation, and visitor contact. To have an effective volunteer program, all volunteers must be trained and appropriately supervised.

*Short  
Range  
Priority*

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## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Uniformed park staff should be easily identifiable so that visitors know who to go to for help or with questions. The presence of uniformed staff members in state parks also helps visitors feel safer and provides them an incentive to observe park regulations. Park staff and volunteers should set a good example for responsible behavior and good stewardship of Park resources.

Park employees and volunteers should always be ready to answer questions for visitors, help them, and provide informal interpretation about park resources or stories pertaining to the park during regular work hours. They should also be willing and ready to help visitors recreate safely which may include teaching safety techniques, encouraging enjoyment of the park's natural and historic resources and the recreational use of the park where appropriate.

## CHAPTER 6: PLAN EVALUATION



This plan reflects the best efforts of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation to analyze the resources of the park and to provide recreational and interpretive opportunities that enhance the park's historical, cultural, archaeological or anthropological values for which the park was established and the visitor experience. This plan is expected to remain relevant to the park's management for approximately 20 years; however, intermediate reviews and appropriate modifications are expected and encouraged. The director may initiate a review at any time and it is strongly recommended that the plan be reviewed via a public process at least every 10 years.

The effectiveness of the plan should be evaluated by the resulting quality of the visitor experience and resource protection, not the number of recommendations completed. The plan should be re-evaluated every five years and updated as necessary.

## APPENDICES

