CASE STUDIES OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD IN AMERICA'S MOST TREASURED PLACES

FOOD FOR THE PARKS

INSTITUTE AT THE GOLDEN GATE

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INTRODUCTION

All park systems, from our nation's largest down to small local parks and places for recreation, have an opportunity to lead a shift to more sustainable food. Environmental preservation is embedded in the mission of all park systems, and the health our nation is directly related to health of our food.

Park systems have an opportunity to serve as powerful symbolic and economic drivers of the national movement toward healthier and more sustainably produced food. Although "sustainability" and "sustainable food" do not have broadly accepted definitions,[1] this report examines and describes efforts to:

- Integrate healthy menu items (as "healthy" was defined or understood for the operation);
- Increase local sourcing (as the term "local" was defined for the operation);
- Increase procurement of food produced using environmentally friendly and humane methods, including:
  - Grass-fed beef
  - Free-range and USDA organic labeled meat and poultry
  - USDA-certified organic produce, grains, proteins, dairy, etc.
  - Shade-grown coffee
  - Seafood listed on the Seafood Watch or Marine Stewardship Council green list;[2]
- Increase procurement of Fair Trade certified food and beverages; and
- Reduce energy and water use and waste related to food preparation and consumption.

A number of parks and concessioners have begun to prioritize sales of sustainable food that has reduced impact on the environment and created healthier food choices. Sourcing even a portion of park food and beverages from sustainable producers would drive millions of dollars into organic production, small businesses, and local economies. This would have a dramatic impact on the natural environment and provide healthy food options for visitors.

The Institute at the Golden Gate's *Food for the Parks* initiative aims to help expand the availability of nutritious, local, organic, and fresh food in parks nationwide by drawing connections between sustainable food service and park values, and by fostering collaboration and potential partnerships. To start a dialogue on the state of food in parks, this case study report represents a first step in connecting the work that many parks and concessioners have done independently. The author acknowledges many concessioners not included in this report are doing innovative and commendable work in sustainable food. The Institute welcomes an opportunity to connect with other parks and concessioners whose work aligns with the goals of the *Food for the Parks* initiative.

This report highlights four concessions, which represent varied geographies and types of parks,

1 See Appendix E for more information about the environmental benefits of sustainable food practices referenced in this report.

2 Seafood Watch maintains a guide to "sustainable seafood" in different regions.

contract sizes, types of food service, and site-specific challenges. It provides information about existing programs and platforms for scaling them to new park units. This report is not an exhaustive best practices guide, nor does it inventory all sustainable food concessions in parks. Each case used resources available to the particular company, park, and region to integrate measures that made the most sense for its operations. Parks have an opportunity to protect the health of the environment through food concessions, and the Institute hopes to foster collaborative efforts to seize this opportunity.

FOOD FIT FOR PARKS

The National Park Service attracts about 286 million visitors each year. This demonstrates the enormous reach of just one park sector.

Publicly protected lands provide visitors with a connection to places and their natural environment, history, and culture. But often, the quality and type of food served does not contribute to a park's environmental mission or unique sense of place.

There is an increasing trend for parks to offer environmentally friendly, high-quality food that is integrated into the visitor experience in ways that support the individual park's particular missions and surroundings. Several parks and concessioners have reduced impact on the environment and created healthier food choices by priorizing sales of sustainable food. For example:

- In the Pacific West, the National Park Service (NPS) awards points to food concession proposals that meet groundbreaking guidelines for nutritious, locally sourced, and organically produced food.
- In Southern California, a state park is working with leaders from the nonprofit sustainable food organization Slow Food to maintain a kitchen garden and provide cooking lessons for at-risk youth.
- In the Rocky Mountain region of the NPS, large concessioners have made innovative company-wide commitments to increasing sustainable food service and minimizing impacts to the park.

> "SCENERY IS HOLLOW ENJOYMENT TO A (VISITOR) WHO SETS OUT IN THE MORNING AFTER AN INDIGESTIBLE BREAKFAST..."
>
> *— Stephen T. Mather,*
> *First Director of the National Park Service*

- In the Northeast and Midwest regions of the NPS, some parks are reintroducing agricultural production, using sustainable farming methods and educating visitors about the park's farming history.
- In the Southeast region of the NPS, parks with plentiful access to local food sources are working to provide healthier menu options.
- In Alaska, NPS concessioners source locally when possible and grow herbs on site.

When parks take steps to purchase more sustainable food, there are direct and indirect impacts on the environment, public health, and local communities. Organic farming prevents the release of pesticides, carbon dioxide emissions, and chemicals into the environment, and local sourcing reduces transportation emissions that contribute to global warming. Local sourcing also connects a park to the surrounding

community and supports local businesses and agricultural producers. Supplying organically grown fresh fruits and vegetables is in line with the NPS goal of promoting health in parks. Additionally, any purchase of sustainable food items creates a larger market for those items and promotes changes in vendors' practices and sourcing. For this reason, an opportunity exists for park concessions serving "sustainable food" to impact markets far beyond their operations.

Sourcing even a portion of park food and beverages from sustainable producers would drive millions of dollars into organic production, small businesses, and local economies. Additionally, by leveraging NPS purchasing power to establish sustainability standards, parks can foster improved food service practices beyond parks.

Four Case Studies of Sustainable Food Programs in Parks

This report highlights four concessions that represent varied geographies and types of parks, contract sizes, types of food service, and site-specific challenges. It provides information about existing programs and platforms for scaling them to new park units.

Summary of Concession Challenges to Source and Serve Sustainable Food

As a result of the research conducted to create this report, it is possible to summarize the challenges that parks and concessioners encounter as they integrate nutritious options, local suppliers, and organic ingredients into their menus:

Line Time. At the busiest parks, NPS concessions staff need to lessen the amount of time visitors spend waiting in line for food. However, this will limit the concessioner's ability to prepare food to order, offer menu items that require assembly, or reduce packaging waste.

Facilities. Food preparation or service facilities may not be equipped to prepare or serve fresh food. For example, mobile kiosks do not include space or equipment for substantial on-site food preparation and storage. In addition, concessioners need different

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CONCESSIONS

Selection of concessioners in the NPS proceeds in roughly the following manner:

2–3 YEARS	9–12 MONTHS	5–8 MONTHS	4–6 MONTHS	2–3 MONTHS	
Prospectus development begins	NPS Releases Prospectus	Prospectus Closes to Bids	Contract Awarded	Contract, Operations, Maintenance Plans Negotiated	**Old contract expires; new concessioner begins operation**

skills and facilities to prepare fresh rather than canned or preserved food.

Customer Food Preferences. Park concessioners provide food for visitors with a range of tastes, and customers generally prefer very familiar menu items. A concessioner who finds a creative preparation for a local or healthy menu item may lack a market for it.

Regional Challenges. In some regions, concessioners serve local cultural dishes but struggle to find dishes that are healthy. In remote areas, few local sources can reliably supply the volume of goods a concession needs.

NPS or Site-Specific Regulations. Many local vendors are accustomed to selling their products through small, local venues rather than commercial vendors regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). For food safety reasons, NPS concessioners are allowed to source only a limited portion of their produce from non-USDA inspected sources such as farmers markets.[3] Also, concessioners cannot construct or renovate facilities without NPS approval.

Price. Grab-and-go and casual dining concessions can have difficulty integrating certain sustainability measures without raising prices, which must remain in the same range as comparable local options. This is dependent on the tastes and economy of the surrounding communities.

3 See Appendix A for guidelines from the NPS Health Office regarding produce sourcing.

Despite these challenges, many parks are clearing a path for small and large-scale sustainability changes.

The Food and Beverage Concession Proposal Process

City, regional, state, and federal parks frequently provide services to their visitors through third-party concessioners. Parks select these concessioners through a competitive bidding process that must be legally defensible. The timeline for selecting a concessioner for a particular contract varies based on the services required under the contract, its size in terms of annual revenues, and the rules of the specific government agency. The text below outlines the proposal and contract process for two park government entities—the NPS and the California State Parks. Clearly these procedures will vary in other states as well as for city and regional parks.

About two to three years before a large multi-service contract[4] expires, concessions specialists at the NPS regional office begin the process of bidding a contract. Depending on the size of the contract, a Park Business Manager, Regional Concessions personnel, or contractors[5] write a prospectus, which outlines the business opportunity for a concessioner and NPS's requirements for this contract. The prospectus also includes a detailed description of the criteria NPS

4 For more information about the types of contracts and agreements the NPS can make with other parties, see the NPS Commercial Services website, http://www.concessions.nps.gov/

5 Any contract with more than $3 million in annual revenues will have its prospectus written by a contractor. Even when the prospectus is contracted out, the NPS determines what to include in the prospectus and contract.

will use to evaluate proposals as well as draft contracts and operating and maintenance plans. The prospectus is usually released about 12 months before contract expiration.[6] NPS offers at least one tour of current facilities for interested concessioners, who typically have 3–4 months[7] to submit a proposal.

A panel composed of NPS regional concessions personnel and technical experts under contract with the NPS then evaluates proposals and chooses the winner based on criteria listed in the prospectus. The park service is careful to choose outside experts without any conflicts of interest or ties to bidders. After NPS awards a contract, any bidder who believes NPS did not correctly apply its stated criteria in choosing a concessioner can challenge the award in federal court. For this reason, the criteria and language used to describe them in the prospectus are considered carefully.

The Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 stressed the importance of protecting the environment as a criterion for judging concession proposals.[8] This authorization led NPS to change the wording of standard criteria included in prospectuses.[9] This law includes general criteria NPS can use to evaluate proposals such as operations, appropriate pricing, experience record, and financial viability, including a breakdown of points for different criteria. Individual prospectuses may place more emphasis on some elements within these broad categories. Concessioners often use sustainable food, energy efficiency, and creative sustainability measures to differentiate their proposals from other bidders with similar qualifications and experience.

Through this process, NPS can require concessioners to include sustainability measures in their concession

6 The NPS cannot release a prospectus more than 18 months before a contract expires.

7 By law, a prospectus must be open a minimum of 60 days.

8 The Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 is Title IV in Public Law 105-391.

9 See Appendix B for text of selection criteria applicable to sustainable food.

proposals, allocate evaluation points toward sustainable food, and make smaller menu-level changes through the annual menu evaluation. However, it is important to note that by law, NPS requires concessioners to keep their menu prices in the same range as comparable local restaurants. Menu items using sustainably sourced food can be considered higher quality and therefore valued at a slightly higher menu price to cover procurement costs, but this issue is not addressed in NPS regulations and is currently resolved at a park-by-park level. Concessioners and NPS personnel work to reach a consensus on the appropriate price.

California State Parks Concessions

The California State Park contract process has a similar structure but generally takes less time. The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) sometimes solicits input through a public meeting and then prepares a Request for Proposal (RFP) that includes a sample contract. Park concessions personnel describe general requirements within the RFP while allowing prospective concessioners to be creative in meeting requirements. Each proposal includes an operations plan subject to evaluation and approval by the DPR. The entire process takes about a year to complete contracts that will last for 10–20 years.

For new services, a two-year contract can be negotiated within several weeks. At the end of the two-year period, the negotiated contract must be put up for public bidding. Each concessioner is also subject to an Annual Performance Evaluation in which the contract provisions, including food-related commitments, are reviewed. A team of park staff conducts a detailed interview process with the concessioner, and the assessment's results are reflected in a positive or negative performance rating.

It is worth noting that California State Parks incentivizes its concessioners to improve their commitments to sustainable food outside the concession contracting process. Concessioners in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park that provide local, organic, sustainable menu items in their concessions are invited to participate in special food-related events that bring several hundred visitors to the park celebrating local foods, wine, and beer. Similar events have occurred or are planned in the North Bay Area and Sacramento, California. Because these events provide valuable opportunities for concessioners to market themselves within the community, the incentive to consistently improve sustainable food commitments is strong.

Methodology

The following experts provided information for this report:

- Regional Chiefs of Concessions at NPS
- Business Managers at NPS units
- Director and Concessions personnel at California State Parks
- Environment & Health Managers for concessioners
- Food & Beverage Managers for concessioners
- Partner organizations to NPS
- Food service experts

Where possible, the experts provided information pertaining to sustainability requirements for food and beverage services in concessions, such as contract proposals, requirements, and definitions for key terms. Detailed information, such as proposal judgment criteria, has been included in Appendix B.

The cases presented in the report represent a diversity of geography, contract size (annual revenues including food and beverage and other services), annual visitation, food service type, and site-specific challenges. Each case used resources available to the particular company, park, and region to integrate measures that made the most sense for its operations.

FOOD
FOR THE
PARKS

CASE STUDIES

PARK HIGHLIGHTS & OTHER NOTABLE SUSTAINABLE FOOD ACTIVITIES

Note: This case study report represents a first step in connecting the work that a sampling of parks and concessioners have done independently. As additional examples are identified and researched, the Institute will be adding new case studies to this report.

Muir Woods Café [10]

PARK UNIT:	Muir Woods National Monument, Golden Gate National Parks
LOCATION:	Marin, California
CONCESSIONER:	Muir Woods Trading Company, Ortega Family Enterprises
SERVICE CATEGORY:	Grab-and-Go
CONTRACT SERVICES:	Food Service, Retail
EST. ANNUAL REVENUES:	$3.1 million
ANNUAL VISITATION:	780,000

10 Sources: Interviews with Anne Altman, Pat Madden, Larry Bain, and Frank Klein; Muir Woods Café Prospectus and Operating Plan; Muir Woods Trading Company presentation to the National Park Service.

The Café inside Muir Woods National Monument used to be a place where a visitor might purchase a sandwich as an afterthought on the way home from a walk on Muir Beach. Today, the Café is a destination in its own right. In response to a prospectus that called for organically produced ingredients, local sourcing, and healthy menu options, concessioner Muir Woods Trading Company (MWTC) sought and found local partners to accomplish its goals. MWTC hired Frank Klein, owner of FK Restaurants & Hospitality, as Project Manager and Food and Beverage Consultant to put together a proposal and oversee the Café. FK Restaurants had been moving toward sustainable food for several years and was excited to use the concession contract as an opportunity to see how far the business could go.

Contract Bidding Process

Developing the prospectus required three years of patience, diligence, and navigation of potential logistical and legal obstacles. A team including Golden Gate National Parks' Business Manager, concessions specialists at Golden Gate National Parks and NPS's Pacific West Regional office, and food expert Larry Bain assembled to determine how sustainable food service could be incorporated into the prospectus for the Muir Woods Café. They wanted to clearly define the criteria that would be used to judge a proposal's food and beverage service but allow concessioners to be creative in meeting those criteria. In addition, they wanted to be sure that evaluation criteria would have measurable and verifiable metrics.

Initially, the team created a complex rating system for sustainable food, similar to LEED for buildings, intended to apply to all new contracts in Golden Gate National Parks. All proposals would have to meet a minimum (bronze) standard, and those that went above the minimum could achieve a rating of silver, gold, or platinum and a reduction in the franchise fee rate. For example, under the bronze rating, a concessioner would have to source 100 percent organic lettuce grown in California. To achieve a higher rating,

the concessioner would have to source an increasing proportion of that organic lettuce from the nine-county Bay Area and would receive an increasing discount to the bronze-level franchise fee rate.

The team decided that the rating system was more complicated than necessary and narrowed it down to key indicators of sustainability in food sourcing. The indicators became Key Guidelines (see Table 1 below) by which food and beverage services would be evaluated in the prospectus.[11] Proposals would then be judged on the proportion of their total food costs that were expended on "sustainable" items and the strength of their commitment to the Key Guidelines. This system quantified the sustainable food commitment in the different proposals, thus providing clarity to bidders and the evaluation panel. Because food and beverage service was a major part of the contract, the team decided to put all "operations" points toward sustainable food.[12]

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF KEY GUIDELINES

Type	Key Indicators
Produce	Organic, local
Beef / Pork / Chicken	No added hormones, antibiotics, genetically modified foods; animal welfare
Dairy	Organic, local, animal welfare
Seafood	Seafood Watch green list
Coffee / Tea / Chocolate	Organic and shade grown, Fair Trade
Water	Not provided in disposable container
Dry Goods/ Condiments	Organic

Because the NPS has strict regulations and approval processes in place for concessions, gaining approval for sustainable food criteria from the NPS required the commitment and energy of key personnel at the regional level. In particular, the Pacific West Region Chief of Concessions and the Department of Interior Pacific West Regional Solicitor were pivotal players who worked through regulatory and legal concerns with the NPS headquarters office and the Department of Interior regional office.

Operations

To address the sustainable food guidelines of the prospectus, MWTC identified local partners from whom the Café could source ingredients and products. Two major partners, Marin Organic and Rustic Bakery, fill these needs and have been able to expand their businesses because of their partnerships with the Muir Woods Café. Marin Organic provides local produce, cheese, and meats, while Rustic Bakery prepares a variety of organic menu items and baked goods. These partnerships are critical to the Café's success.

MWTC initially identified items available locally in different seasons, and it now builds seasonal menus to take full advantage of local food. Fresh produce comprises 35 percent of the Café's menu. All fruits and vegetables are organically produced, and in 2009 87 percent of produce was sourced within 30 miles of the park. Proteins are also local—80 percent come from within Marin County and 100 percent come from California. They are free of added hormones, recombinant bovine growth hormone, genetically modified food, irradiation, and added fats, and 90 percent of proteins are organic. The menu offers vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, lowfat, and low-sodium items. It does not include products with refined sugars, trans-fats, high-fructose corn syrup, or processed white flour. Snack items do not include candy or fried chips, and many are sugar-free.

Business from the Muir Woods Café has in turn supported sustainably minded local partner Rustic Bakery. In its own operations, Rustic Bakery's café shares the sustainability ideals of MWTC, using entirely organic and local ingredients and preparing all food by hand. Muir Woods was the café's first outside customer. With the business it receives from

11 See Appendix B for full Key Guidelines document.

12 See Appendix C for evaluation criteria included in the Muir Woods Café Prospectus.

Muir Woods and a second customer, the bakery is doubling its production capacity.

Site Challenges

Although the Bay Area has an abundance of organically produced food available locally, any concessioner at Muir Woods Café had a unique challenge because it had to "reduce, mitigate, or eliminate the introduction" of smells that interfere with the natural smells of the Park and also minimize its land area footprint.[13] This meant that cooking on site would be difficult if not impossible. MWTC uses local partnerships to address this challenge by purchasing prepared goods and only assembling and warming them on site, which contributes to higher prices for customers and lower profits for the Café's food and beverage service. To meet this challenge while maintaining menu prices that compete with local offerings, MWTC has strategically chosen menu items that meet various tastes and price points.

Finding savvy and willing partners required substantial time and energy, and not all potential partners approached by MWTC had the resources needed or wanted to grow their businesses to accommodate the Café's volume of business. In preparing its proposal, the company approached many local partners but found only a few that were willing and able to be long-term partners.

Visitor Education

Muir Woods Café includes subtle but high-impact educational materials throughout the food area that explain why the Café uses organic and local ingredients and encourage visitors to conserve resources and reduce waste. At the entrance, signage explains that local, organic, and sustainable food items support the local economy, reduce transportation emissions, and avoid preservatives and chemicals in food. Another sign encourages visitors to use stainless steel water bottles to reduce litter and save natural resources.

13 Muir Woods Café Prospectus Proposal Package, Subfactor 1(c), p. 8.

Flyers built into café tables provide information about individual farmers who grow the food visitors eat and the network of farms that Marin Organic encompasses. At the end of the meal, signage above three bins labeled "compost only," "recycle only," and "landfill" describe in words and displays which items should be placed in which bins.

Packaging and Waste Management

Items purchased from the café come with minimal packaging, and packaging is compostable. The café does not serve bottled water but instead charges $0.25 for a compostable cup that can be filled at two water stations in the café or at various stations throughout the park. Composting remains a challenge for MWTC. While Marin Organic is able to take some compostable waste, varying definitions of "compostable" in the municipalities surrounding the Café mean that some compost must travel 25 miles to a facility that will accept it. In the current waste stream, only 15 percent of waste must go to a landfill; 55 percent of waste is recycled and 30 percent is composted.

New facilities and operational changes have yielded significant reductions in waste generation and energy and water use. Suppliers make infrequent site deliveries and minimize packaging waste. For example, Rustic Bakery delivers all its goods in reusable containers with zero waste. MWTC uses low-emissions natural gas and hybrid vehicles to transport goods and employees to Muir Woods and receives an average of 9 deliveries per week during peak periods compared to 29 per week under the previous concessioner. MWTC has been able to reduce water use at this concession by 59.6 percent and energy use by 30.2 percent between 2008 and 2009.

The building that houses the café and retail shop is awaiting LEED certification and contains several notable features. Tabletops in the café were made from recycled beverage bottles sourced from Bay Area restaurants by local company Vetrazzo. The café counter fronts were built from a wood substitute,

Kirei Board, manufactured from reclaimed sorghum straw. The café floors were made from durable recycled cork and rubber composite squares, and the retail area floor was created from old picnic tables from Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

Asilomar State Beach Crocker Dining Hall[14]

PARK UNIT:	Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds
LOCATION:	Pacific Grove, California
CONCESSIONER:	Aramark Corporation
SERVICE CATEGORY:	Conference Meals, Catering, Snacks
CONTRACT SERVICES:	Lodging, Food Service, Conference Space, Retail
EST. ANNUAL REVENUES:	$22 million
ANNUAL VISITATION:	8.5 million

14 Sources: Interviews with Alison Edwards, State Parks Director Ruth Coleman, Chief of Concessions Jim Luscatoff, and e-mail correspondence with DPR concessions personnel.

The California State Parks' Healthy Foods Initiative (HFI) began at a 2004 event honoring California's Remarkable Women at Asilomar State Beach, when Slow Food leader Alice Waters and State Park Director Ruth Coleman discussed matching the quality of food served here with the splendor of the natural surroundings and architectural beauty of the dining hall. Since that evening, California State Parks have made a "commitment to assist visitors in making positive dietary choices and changes by encouraging our concessionaires to provide local, seasonal, organically grown and sustainably produced, and reduced-fat foods."[15] Historically, a food service site for the YWCA, Crocker Dining Hall is returning to its roots through a focus on local and healthy food.

Contract Bidding

The Asilomar Request for Proposals (RFP) included language encouraging concessioners to showcase sustainable food in their proposals. It required bidders to submit plans pertaining to healthy foods and educational programs for visitors. Proposals were required to include, among other things, details of intended California sources that use sustainable agriculture, healthy menu options as defined by USDA and the Food and Drug Administration, beverage options with no sugar added, food products that are as pure and natural as possible and interpretive materials and programs around sustainable food production and healthy cooking.[16] This or similar language is now included in all Asilomar RFPs that identify a food-service component, whether a restaurant, camp store, or small mobile food service operation. Higher scores are obtained by proposers that conform to the HFI.

Selected to serve on the panel to evaluate proposals, food expert Ann Evans was instrumental in helping park personnel compare proposals. The winning

15 E-mail correspondence from California State Parks concessions staff, June 16, 2010.

16 See Appendix D for actual language included in the Asilomar RFP.

proposal from Aramark Corporation included detailed plans to comply with the HFI requirements. Aramark began operations at Asilomar in late 2009.

Operations

Aramark operates a retail shop with drinks and limited snacks, Crocker Dining Hall, and a catering service at Asilomar. The retail shop serves tea and Fair Trade, shade-grown coffee; more than half of the tea and coffee purchased to source the cafe is organic. In addition, healthy and organic snacks and drinks make up over half of the food retail options. Aramark has plans to add a grab-and-go café to the site's social hall; nearly all items served in the café will be made from local, seasonal, and organic ingredients.

The Dining Hall opens three times per day—for an hour each time for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Visitors pay a set price to enter the hall, and entrees are served cafeteria-style. Soups, salads, fresh seasonal fruits, coffee, and desserts, available for visitors to take at their leisure, are made in-house and from scratch when possible. Catering uses seasonal menus based on items available. The DPR approves catering menus annually.

Crocker Dining Hall and catering facilities highlight local ingredients in food and beverage options, including fresh Seafood Watch green list fish, sustainably grown fruits and vegetables, and California cheese and wine.[17] To serve local and seasonal items, Aramark works primarily with one group to connect with sustainable local suppliers including Coke Farm, Happy Boy Farm, Fresh Point Purveyor, and Veritable Vegetable.[18] All food service uses hormone-free milk, and Aramark plans to expand its sources of local meats. Aramark serves only seafood listed in the Seafood Watch green list. Aramark is tracking the food and beverage expenditures spent on produce that is organically produced and within 120 miles of Asilomar, as well as additional produce sourced within California. As a new concessioner at this site, Aramark plans to develop the sustainable food and beverage management more over time.

Site Challenges

Aramark's menus require large amounts of fresh food and ingredients, and the long-standing workforce in place when Aramark took over the concession was not accustomed to preparing this type of food product. Changing food preparation processes and training the workforce to use fresh ingredients for a new menu featuring local and seasonal products has required significant time and energy. The facilities were also set up to prepare conventionally packaged food, but this has required only organizational changes to the food preparation area rather than structural changes. In its long-range plan, Aramark plans to make a capital investment in renovating the dining hall, including the service line and kitchen facilities. The renovations will be designed to improve the service, education, and flow of the dining hall and will showcase the healthy sustainable food of the region to guests.

The State Park system sets Asilomar's room and meal prices at a rate intended to be affordable for all visitors, and the low price point provides a challenge for any concessioner sourcing local, fresh, and organic food items. Currently, approximately 50–60 percent of produce is purchased from regional organic farms. An additional challenge is the limiting structure of food service at the dining hall; only two main dish options are served at each meal, and Aramark must ensure that these items will appeal to all types of customers. Customers come to the site for conferences and vacations where eating is a secondary rather than primary activity. To address these issues, Aramark has focused time and energy into developing and preparing menus for simple dishes using seasonal ingredients for the dining hall and catering operations. In addition, seasonal catering

17 Source: "Asilomar Conference Grounds Hires Chef Danny Abbruzzese to Emphasize Local, Sustainable Food." www.visitasilomar.com/media.

18 Source: "Local and Sustainable Menu Initiative, Asilomar Conference Grounds." www.visitasilomar.com/media.

menus that feature local organic products have been developed and are being put into place. These menus drive Aramark's purchasing.

Visitor Education

Aramark has some visitor education in place around its food sources, but future planned improvements will include much more. Currently, the dining hall displays maps showing the location of produce farms sources, and some signage explains Aramark's vision for sustainable food at Asilomar. The dining hall also offers information about Seafood Watch. For catered events, Aramark includes signage on the buffet table or the menu about the food sources. Increased and improved visitor education will be a key component of the café construction at the social hall as well as the capital improvements to the dining hall.

Packaging and Waste Management

Aramark's food service at Asilomar is in the process of transitioning all of its to-go packaging to compostable materials. Currently, Aramark composts all food waste in partnership with Monterey Regional Waste, which picks up food waste and compostable packaging from Asilomar, provides a site to compost it, and sells the compost to farmers.

Aramark is also working to implement an ISO 14001 certified environmental management system that will track its impact both on-site and through its purchasing. Asilomar will be one of many sites at which Aramark employs the system to track and measure environmental metrics, including impacts from food and beverage procurement, and to identify areas for improvement. This system will help Aramark identify future opportunities to reduce the company's ecological footprint.[19]

Yellowstone Lodges[20]

PARK UNIT:	Yellowstone National Park
LOCATION:	Northwest Wyoming, Southwest Montana
CONCESSIONER:	Xanterra Parks & Resorts
SERVICE CATEGORY:	Fine Dining, Casual Dining, Grab-and-Go, Grocery
CONTRACT SERVICES:	Lodging, Food Service, Retail, Guide Services & Outfitters, Winter Sports, Horse & Mule Operations, Marinas, Trailer Village
EST. ANNUAL REVENUES:	$79.8 million
ANNUAL VISITATION:	3.3 million

19 For information about ISO 14001, see http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_14000_essentials.

20 Information primarily from interviews with Beth Pratt, Lu Harlow, and Jacque Lavelle.

Yellowstone was the first National Park and remains one of the most famous in the National Park System. Its 3.3 million annual visitors come from all over the United States and the world with a variety of tastes and budgets. On a busy summer day, concessioners at Yellowstone National Park serve up to 22,000 lunches. Xanterra at Yellowstone has taken the broad range of services it provides at Yellowstone as an opportunity to take sustainability to a level few operations have achieved.

Contract Bidding

The prospectus for this contract requires the concessioner to include in its menu "vegetarian entrees, heart healthy entrees, light eater's entrees, and children's menus."[21] Language in the plan encourages, but does not require, organic and local sourcing for food and beverages. This allows Xanterra to choose where and how to implement sustainable food.

Operations

Yellowstone Lodges' Food & Beverage Director began sourcing sustainable food in the early 2000s. Yellowstone and other individual concession units blazed the trail for Xanterra to embrace company-wide sustainability goals, including a goal to spend 50 percent of all food expenditures on "sustainable food" by 2015.[22] Xanterra at Yellowstone has increased its sustainable food expenditures by nearly 600 percent over a year 2003 baseline and continues to find new ways to incorporate sustainable food procurement.[23]

Xanterra defines "sustainable" food and ingredients company-wide as: purchased from USDA-certified organic producers, produced within a 500-mile radius of the park, Fair Trade certified, or on the green list of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). Under Xanterra's definition of sustainable food, about 32 percent of Yellowstone's food and beverage offerings overall are sustainable with substantial variation between fine dining and grab-and-go operations. A popular menu item is a "MSC-certified BLT" on whole grain bread. Xanterra is slowly increasing vegan and vegetarian items into its menus based on visitor demand.

In general, Xanterra has not found that sustainable food sourcing significantly impacts its profits, and visitors appreciate the focus on organic and local sourcing. Prices of menu items have increased by small amounts, but rising costs of food in general often contribute more to price increases than sustainable sourcing.

Local sourcing has helped Xanterra reduce the significant costs it incurs to transport food items to this relatively remote location. Local vendors provide beef, potatoes, produce, bread, dairy products, and unique local products such as huckleberries, game, and MSC-certified fish including salmon. Xanterra sources some of its coffee from local roasting companies and the majority of its beer from local breweries. Some vendors, including a local goat cheese farm, have been able to grow their businesses as a result of their relationship with Xanterra at Yellowstone.

Site Challenges

Yellowstone is nearby to some vendors, but finding local vendors that can reliably service high-volume orders has been a serious challenge. In the summer, it is difficult for Xanterra to consistently meet its internal requirement to source a certain proportion of food, especially produce, from local vendors. Some products remain out of Xanterra's price range or are difficult to find locally. For now, Xanterra has found organic dairy products to be too expensive. Organic wine was difficult to find locally, but this became easier when Xanterra recently expanded its definition

21 This language is fairly standard across prospectuses for contracts that include food and beverage service and can be found under Principal Selection Factor 2.

22 See Xanterra Environmental Program website, http://www.xanterra.com/environmental-program-highlights-372.html.

23 Source: Xanterra Parks & Resorts at Yellowstone: Environmental Initiatives, 2009.

of sustainable purchasing to include products purchased within a 500-mile radius.

The Western Sustainability Exchange has assisted Xanterra with finding sustainable local vendors through an annual gathering of vendors and purchasers. Because it has such a large food operation, Xanterra can work with strong local vendors to help them stay in business. For instance, ranchers often have difficulty selling sub-prime cuts of meat, so Xanterra purchases whole bison from local rancher Kroon Bison, serves the prime cuts, and then uses the sub-prime cuts to make popular bison burgers.

Xanterra has invested time and energy with vendors to examine the precise meaning behind product labels like "natural" and "sustainable." Several years ago, one local vendor advertised its beef as grass-fed, and Xanterra began sourcing beef from this vendor. However, because grass does not grow in this region in the winter, the vendor shipped his beef cattle to California in the winter to maintain his "grass-fed" credibility. Xanterra decided that the benefits of purchasing locally raised beef outweighed its preference for all-grass-fed beef and discontinued its relationship with this vendor. In addition, not all customers liked grass-fed beef, which tastes notably different than corn-fed beef. Xanterra has to balance customer preference, local availability, animal welfare, and environmental impact when deciding how to source this single product.

Visitor Education

While Xanterra at Yellowstone reaches out to visitors in a number of ways about sustainability, visitor education about sustainable food is an area targeted for improvement. A "For Future Generations" store educates visitors about climate change and explains what they can do in the park and back at home to reduce their environmental footprint, including a display on sustainable food. In 2009, a new logo was placed next to menu items in which the main component is sustainable, and fine dining menus include information about sustainable food and local vendors. Hotel room brochures outline all the environmental programs at Xanterra's Yellowstone operations, including sustainable food. The next step is to include educational materials in all eating establishments.

Waste and Energy Efficiency[24]

Sustainability within Xanterra's food service operations does not end with product sourcing. Because of the extreme weather in Yellowstone, a large proportion of the energy and water used in Xanterra's facilities goes toward food preparation. To save costs and reduce their environmental footprint, the food preparation facilities recently procured ovens that use 40 percent less energy and 30 percent less water than their previous ovens.

Xanterra also diverts used cooking oil from its waste stream and uses it to heat its hotel facilities, a project for which it won a NPS Environmental Achievement Award in 2009. The project uses 10,000 gallons of cooking oil and grease per year, reducing diesel fuel use by that amount and avoiding over 200,000 pounds of carbon dioxide that would be emitted from diesel use. The project also reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 12,729 pounds of carbon dioxide by eliminating the transportation of the used oil to a recycling facility.

In all its operations, Xanterra at Yellowstone has been able to divert 73 percent of its waste from landfills through traditional recycling, innovative recycling programs, and composting. Grab-and-go facilities use bulk containers for condiments to reduce packaging waste. Xanterra owns and operates a composting facility for the entire park that turned 2.2 million pounds of waste into marketable compost in 2009. All its to-go packaging, disposable cutlery, and even cooking containers are made of compostable materials, thus diverting 12 tons of material per year from landfills.

24 Source: Xanterra Parks & Resorts at Yellowstone: Environmental Initiatives, 2009.

Mount Rushmore Carvers Café[25]

PARK UNIT:	Mount Rushmore National Memorial
LOCATION:	Black Hills, South Dakota
CONCESSIONER:	Xanterra Parks & Resorts
SERVICE CATEGORY:	Casual Dining, Grab-and-Go
CONTRACT SERVICES:	Food Service, Retail, Rentals
EST. ANNUAL REVENUES:	$11.7 million
ANNUAL VISITATION:	2.26 million

At Carvers Café, named for the workers who carved colossal faces into the Black Hills of South Dakota, visitors can eat their lunches in the presence of presidential greatness. Although the location and climate of this site present significant challenges to sustainable food and beverage sourcing, Xanterra at Mount Rushmore is constantly finding new ways to take advantage of the expertise and creativity of its staff to serve sustainably produced food with local flavor.

Contract Bidding Process

The prospectus for this concession clearly prioritizes fresh and healthy menu items. Specifically, it notes that the park service is particularly interested in "an emphasis on freshly prepared wholesome and healthy food offerings as well as grab-and-go items" in a consessioner's proposed menu.[26] The draft operating plan requires that menus "have a focus on healthy, wholesome foods with limited evidence of convenience or canned foods."[27]

Operations

Carvers Café looks like a food court, with different fast food restaurants surrounding a seating area that looks out onto Mount Rushmore. All American Favorites, Presidential Features, Bosun Chair Bakery, Dakota Grill & Pizza, and Memorial Team Ice Cream display their kitchens for café visitors. After purchasing food and beverage items, visitors can sit down to eat next to a slate fireplace or outside on the Grandview Terrace.

Carvers Café features traditional American food but also regional specialties that highlight local ingredients and cultural history. Xanterra partners with a local rancher to serve hormone-free, grass-fed bison meat in burgers, chili, and stew. Vendors such as Dakota's Best provide packaged food typical of the Northern Plains region. Guests may choose from items such as gourmet Lakota Popcorn from the harvest of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, bison, antelope, elk, or venison sausage, Railroad Bill's Cashew Crunch, and Sioux Fry Bread mix that visitors can bake at home.[28] In addition, Xanterra serves local Prairie Berry, Valiant Vineyards, and Schade wines. Because the region has few sources of fresh produce, Xanterra has planted a garden in the nearby town of Keystone to grow tomatoes, squash, radishes, carrots, peppers, potatoes, and onions. A greenhouse on top of the café grows spinach and other items throughout the year. Xanterra strives to introduce three new menu items that meet its definition of sustainable food at each site annually, and on-site cultivation will help Mount Rushmore meet that goal. Sustainable cuisine

25 Sources: Interview with Britt Daiss and e-mail correspondence with NPS Midwest Regional Concessions personnel.

26 Source: MORU001-004 Proposal Package, p. 6.

27 Source: MORU001-004 Proposal Package Exhibit B, p. B-13.

28 Sources: Interview with Britt Daiss and Made in South Dakota website, http://www.madeinsouthdakota.com.

purchases, under the Xanterra company definition of that term (see Asilomar on p.16), have increased at Mount Rushmore from less than 1 percent in 2001 to 30 percent in 2009.

The coffee served at the different stations in Carvers Cafe' is entirely organic, Fair Trade certified, bird friendly, and shade-grown, supplied by Green Mountain Coffee Roasters. Per Xanterra company requirements, all fish served is listed on the Seafood Watch green list. Xanterra also integrates vegetarian and vegan menu items according to customer demand. At Mount Rushmore, visitors come from all areas of the country and world, and Xanterra has worked to provide healthy food and local dishes along with traditional fare through the Café's variety of fast food offerings.

Site Challenges

The site is located far from urban centers, which makes sourcing difficult and transportation expensive. South Dakota's interior continental climate of extremely cold winters and hot summers is not ideal for producing many crops. Because the region is sparsely populated, few local producers exist from which Xanterra can reliably source locally produced food. To address this challenge, Xanterra has begun growing some produce on site.

Customer demand is seasonal at Mount Rushmore, with an extremely busy summer season and a slow winter season. Xanterra has trouble finding local sources that can provide the volume of goods needed to keep up with the summer demand. Supply consistency is an issue Xanterra must monitor regularly.

Without a fine dining facility in this contract, Xanterra at Mount Rushmore lacks a high-end price point that can support more expensive ingredients in casual and grab-and-go food service. Also, visitors prioritize speed and convenience in food service at this site. Because Carvers Café has to offer fast food at the same level of pricing as comparable local restaurant options, Xanterra must balance food costs, revenue, sustainability, and menu prices to provide customers with the best value. As the market for sustainably produced food expands, more items are becoming available and prices are falling. As this trend continues, Xanterra anticipates that it will be able to advance sustainable food procurement at Mount Rushmore.

Visitor Education

Before a visitor arrives at Mount Rushmore, he or she can browse Xanterra's Mount Rushmore website[29] to learn about the connection between the food served at Carvers Café and the region's history and culture. The website includes an explanation of the benefits of sustainably grown and Fair Trade coffee, including environmental and wildlife protection and support for coffee farmers. All American Favorites cites dishes that feature sustainably produced bison, such as buffalo stew and bison chili. In terms of healthy menu options, the website touts salads, whole wheat pastas, and whole wheat pancakes. Visitor education through the website ties healthy, sustainably produced menu items directly to satisfying and delicious meals. The salads are described as "gourmet," and sustainably produced beef and bison burgers are called "mouth-watering."

On site, Carvers Café has signage about sustainable food and the local producers from which Mount Rushmore sources food and beverage items. The grab-and-go section of the café includes a selection of South Dakota-made food with an explanation of the items' origins. Display cases and table tents also provide information about Xanterra's sustainable sourcing activities at Mount Rushmore.

Packaging and Waste Management

Xanterra diverts about 30,000 pounds of waste each year through its composting operations at Mount Rushmore, which use Earth Tub Composters. The compost goes back into the greenhouse and garden

29 See the Carvers Café website, http://www.mtrushmorenationalmemorial.com/carvers-cafe-1882.html

as a natural fertilizer for the produce grown on site, effectively closing the loop on Xanterra's food production system. The entire Xanterra operation at Mount Rushmore diverts 45 percent of its waste from landfills.

OTHER NOTABLE PARK SUSTAINABLE FOOD ACTIVITIES

Grand Teton Concessions. Both Forever Resorts and Grand Teton Lodge Company have helped develop regional markets for organically produced food in the Mountain West. Their purchasing has caused their suppliers to seek out and serve sustainable food items to all customers, not just the Grand Teton concessions. [30]

Fort McHenry Visitors Center. A new contract for retail and food and beverage concessions at Fort McHenry will offer lunches to visiting school groups. These lunches will include organic and locally sourced ingredients and will be served in compostable packaging.

Zion Lodge. The most unique of Xanterra's food and beverage-related sustainability measures at Zion is the elimination of bottled water within the park. Visitors fill reusable water bottles at "hydration stations" throughout the park. Zion National Park estimates that this action eliminated the annual sale of 60,000 bottles of water and 5,000 pounds of waste.[31]

Rose Kennedy Greenway. The Boston-based stretch of urban park started a pilot program in June 2010 with six mobile food vendors that serve local, seasonal, and healthy menu items and incorporate environmentally friendly operations, such as recycling cooking oil to help fuel the food truck.[32]

30 Sources: Interviews with personnel from Forever Resorts at Signal Mountain Lodge and Grand Teton Lodge Company.

31 Source: Department of the Interior Environmental Achievement Awards Recipients 2008.

32 Sources: Ryan, Andrew. "Luring Fresh, Tasty Food to Park Greenway," in *The Boston Globe*, March 15, 2010; Greenway Conservancy website "Food on the Greenway," http://www.rosekennedygreenway.org/visit/

MARTIN VAN BUREN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE AND THE ROXBURY FARM

Martin Van Buren, the 8th President of the United States, became an avid farmer after leaving political office and corresponded with the leaders of his day about agriculture. The area of his farm was a neighbor of the Park until national legislation passed in March 2009 brought it within the park boundary. The Open Space Institute owns the land and has committed to use it to support sustainable agriculture through Roxbury Farm.

Roxbury Farm is one of the largest community-supported farms in the country and one of the first to provide goods to shareholders in Manhattan. The farm produces vegetables, herbs, and grass-fed pork, lamb, and beef. Farmers hold lifelong leases that are inheritable with fees based on the agricultural value of the land. Roxbury is a biodynamic farm that uses sustainable and environmentally friendly production methods—with similarities to the way President Van Buren farmed this land.

Martin Van Buren National Historic Site and Roxbury Farm are working out the terms of a partnership that would capitalize on the opportunity to educate Park visitors about the site's history and the history of U.S. agricultural production. The Park Service intends to use a trail system to highlight the farm and provide interpretive materials, and the farm is already working to connect the issues related to cultivation in Martin Van Buren's time to Roxbury's farming methods. The partnership and resulting programs will connect past and present food production methods and bring the agricultural history of this site to life.

Sources: Interview with Dan Datillio and Roxbury Farm's website, www.roxburyfarm.com.

CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK'S COUNTRYSIDE INITIATIVE: PRODUCING FOOD IN A NATIONAL PARK

Ohio's Cuyahoga Valley was designated as a National Park Service unit in 1974. One of its missions is to preserve and protect its rural landscape from encroaching development, because the area has a strong history of agricultural production. Facing high turnover of short-term farmers within the park and deteriorating structures, the park teamed up with agriculture educator Darwin Kelsey in the late 1990s to write a management plan to preserve the park's rural landscape resources through financially and environmentally sustainable farming. The resulting Countryside Initiative, launched in 1999, is a groundbreaking partnership between between Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the Countryside Conservancy, and local farmers to connect historical preservation, local culture, environmental protection, and food production with public education and enjoyment.

To date, Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) has signed 60-year leases with 11 farm operators, each of whom won a competitive RFP process that evaluated its business plan and financial viability. Operations must "operate in the same general part of the sustainability spectrum" or be certified organic (2009 RFP). The 60-year lease provides farmers the stability they need to recover costs of investment in capital improvements on the land. Farmers pay fair-market-value residential rent to CVNP and a percentage of gross income as the productive rent on land use.

The Countryside Conservancy was created by CVNP to help manage the Countryside Initiative. With Darwin Kelsey as its Director, the Conservancy acts as the public face of the Countryside Initiative, provides agricultural expertise to CVNP, recruits bidders, provides recommendations on RFP drafting and proposal selection, assists existing farmers, operates two farmers markets, and has ambitions to add programs. The Conservancy also plays the important role of facilitating communication between the different cultures of CVNP and the farmers.

The current farms produce fruits, vegetables, cut flowers, eggs, poultry, meat goats, and wine. They sell their products through roadside stands, local farmers markets, local chefs, community supported agriculture, and pick-your-own operations. Park Interpretation staff are working with the farmers to incorporate visitor education around their operations, including Junior Ranger programs that teach kids about farming and the operations at individual farms. For example, pre-schoolers draw pictures in the Butterfly Garden at Sarah's Vineyard to learn about plants and butterflies. At the Greenfield Berry Farm, children learn about the history of farming in the Cuyahoga Valley through a series of games.

Embarking on the Countryside Initiative was not without challenges. Promoting agricultural production within NPS was a unique idea with little support when the Countryside Initiative was conceived. To assess potential impacts and receive public input, CVNP prepared the Rural Landscape Management Program Environmental Impact Statement, which was approved in February 2004. The program also required a substantial up-front appropriation. The program is proving to be a success; however, it requires a considerable amount of work from both the Conservancy and CVNP to maintain.

Future plans for the Initiative include expanded education partnerships building farming and food curricula, farmer incubation, and consultation to other parks interested in replicating this program.

Sources: Interviews with Paul Stoehr and Darlene Kelbach of CVNP and Darwin Kelsey of Countryside Conservancy; 2009 Countryside Initiative RFP; the Countryside Conservancy's website, www.cvcountryside.org; Stewardship Begins with People: An Atlas of Places, People, and Handmade Products, National Park Service Conservation Study Institute, 2007.

CONCLUSION

The cases highlighted in this report collectively hosted 14.8 million visitors and represent $116.6 million in annual revenues.[33] Committing just 10 percent of this purchasing power toward sustainably produced foods creates a multi-million dollar driver for local and organic businesses that are producing food using environmentally responsible methods. Increasing the size of the market for these products will also bring down their prices, making them more affordable and accessible, and will have huge environmental, economic, and public health impacts. These trends are already visible in the operations and supply chains of park concessioners who serve sustainable food.

While incorporating sustainable food and beverage service into a concession operation is not always easy, it is possible at various price points and in the most demanding of geographies. Healthy and sustainably produced menu items can be developed to appeal to a broad range of tastes. Facility and operational changes can reduce energy and water use and utility costs for concessioners. Most importantly, sustainable food service—and production—can strengthen the connection between visitor and place that parks work so hard to create.

Nowhere is this connection more clear than in parks where agricultural production is occurring in historically farmed areas. The opportunities to educate visitors about the history of these parks and their roles in past and current food systems are vast, and parks like Cuyahoga Valley National Park and Martin Van Buren National Historic Site are engaging the local community by seizing these opportunities.

Current sustainable food concessions are making a significant impact on local economies and the market for sustainable food, but much work remains to be done. Park concessioners spend hundreds of millions of dollars to source their food and beverage products, and many of them do not incorporate healthy or sustainably produced items into their menus. Some may not know where to find organic products or what operational changes could make an environmental impact. This report demonstrates how some concessions have addressed the challenges they faced and aspires to show that these actions are worthwhile for concessioners, parks, and our global food system.

A core mission of NPS is "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life" in protected spaces and "to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them *unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.*"[34] At a time when climate change threatens scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife in parks, sustainable food sourcing in park concessions is both possible and necessary to ensure that future generations will have the chance to enjoy them.

33 Revenue numbers include all services under the concession, not only food and beverage revenues.

34 Source: National Park Service Organic Act.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
PRODUCE SOURCING GUIDELINES

Source: E-mail guidance from NPS Public Health Office, 2010.

Interpretation/Guidance: The NPS Public Health Program will allow the use of farmers markets as a source of produce with two provisions:

1. The use of farmers markets as a source of produce for NPS food service facilities shall be an occasional practice, intended to supplement commercial supplies with local, seasonal, or hard-to-find produce items. The majority of produce used in any operation must come from a commercial (inspected) supply.
2. If an operator wishes to make one or more unregulated suppliers a routine or majority source of produce, then the supplier must provide written evidence that they have substantial and purposeful control over food safety issues. Evidence of this effort shall be in the form of active managerial controls of food safety hazards as demonstrated by practices that follow the FDA guidance titled, *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*. This document can be found on the Internet at http://www.foodsafety.gov/~dms/prodguid.html. Evidence of these controls must be made available to the NPS Public Health Consultant.

APPENDIX B
SELECTION CRITERIA IN NPS PROSPECTUSES

These criteria (among others) are included in each prospectus released by the NPS.

Principal Selection Factor 1. The responsiveness of the proposal to the objectives, as described in the prospectus, of protecting, conserving, and preserving resources of the Park.

Principal Selection Factor 2. The responsiveness of the proposal to the objectives, as described in the prospectus, of providing necessary and appropriate visitor services at reasonable rates.

Secondary Selection Factor 1. The quality of the offeror's proposal to conduct its operations in a manner that furthers the protection, conservation, and preservation of the Park and other resources through environmental management programs and activities, including, without limitation, energy conservation, waste reduction, and recycling.

APPENDIX C
SUSTAINABLE FOOD LANGUAGE IN MUIR WOODS CAFÉ PROSPECTUS (2008)

This language was included in the 2008 Muir Woods Café Prospectus under "Principal Selection Factor 2," which is a standard selection factor listed in Appendix B. Each prospectus fleshes out the criteria used to judge how strongly each proposal addresses this selection factor.

From Muir Woods Café proposal package CC-MUWO001-08, pp. 9-10.

PRINCIPAL SELECTION FACTOR 2. THE RESPONSIVENESS OF THE PROPOSAL TO THE OBJECTIVES, AS DESCRIBED IN THE PROSPECTUS, OF PROVIDING NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE VISITOR SERVICES AT REASONABLE RATES.

Note to Offeror: *Although many factors influence the objectives of necessary and appropriate visitor services at reasonable rates, the Service has chosen in this Selection Factor to focus on Sustainable food and beverage services. The term "Sustainable" is defined in Section 11(a) of the Operating Plan (which is Exhibit A to the New Contract, included in part V of this Prospectus).*

The Service will evaluate the Offeror's response to this Principal Selection Factor on the basis of the following criteria for food and beverage service (collectively, the "Criteria"), listed in descending order of importance. For purposes of the Criteria, the term Core Menu has the same meaning as set out in the *National Park Service Concession Management Rate Approval Guide* (September, 2002), a copy of which is included as Appendix F to this Prospectus. The information provided in response to this subfactor must be integrated into the financial projections you provide in subfactor 4(d).

Criteria, listed in descending order of importance

1) **Sustainability of ingredients used in food and beverage items:** The degree to which the ingredients of each of the Core Menu and seasonal menu items meet, by food type (e.g. produce, protein, etc.) the applicable guidelines in the Key Guidelines chart that is included as Attachment A to Exhibit A: Operating Plan to the New Contract. Degree will be measured in terms of what portion of the total cost (expressed as a percentage) of all ingredients of all of the Core Menu and seasonal menu items is attributable to ingredients that fulfill the Key Guidelines.

2) **Sustainability of items used to serve food and beverage items:** The degree to which the service items (e.g. packaging, utensils, etc.) used for each of the Core Menu and seasonal menu items meet the applicable guidelines in the Key Guidelines chart. Degree will be measured in terms of what portion of the total cost (expressed as a percentage) of the service items used for all Core Menu and seasonal menu items are service items that fulfill the Key Guidelines.

3) **Price range:** The degree to which the prices proposed for Core Menu and seasonal menu items

are reasonable and appropriate. Degree will be evaluated both as to the overall range of prices as well as to the number and kind of food and beverage items offered at individual prices.

4) **Variety:** The degree to which the food and beverage items offered appeal to a wide range of visitors from a wide range of geographic areas.

5) **Style of service:** The degree to which the food and beverage items are appropriate and feasible for the type of facilities and the visitor use.

Subfactor 2(a). Food and Beverage Menu and Service Items

1) Describe generally your overall concept of and plan for a food and beverage service that will be Sustainable (as defined in Section 11(a) of the Operating Plan for the New Contract). Include a clear and concise discussion of how your concept and plan addresses the Criteria (outlined above). Please organize and present that discussion in a manner that clearly identifies each of the individual Criteria being discussed.

2) Propose 10 Core Menu items and five beverage items, as well as three additional seasonal items for each of the four seasons of the year, for a total of 12 seasonal items. Designate on the proposed menu items which of the food items will be Core Menu items and which will be seasonal.
3) For each of the core menu and seasonal items proposed:

   (a) Provide, using the Service-supplied "Proposal Package: Menu Spreadsheet" ("Spreadsheet"), included as Appendix D to this Prospectus.

      (i) a breakdown (by the four major food and service types listed on the Key Guidelines chart) of each ingredient and of any associated service items (e.g. packaging and utensils) in the core menu and seasonal items (collectively, the "Components" and each individually a "Component"); and

      (ii) for each Component, identify (1) estimated quantities, costs, and item prices; (2) proposed supplier; and (3) which of the guidelines in the Key Guidelines chart are met;

   (b) Demonstrate that each of the proposed suppliers identified in the Spreadsheet will be available and able to supply the proposed Component (for example, through a letter of commitment or similar information); and

   (c) Demonstrate, on a Component by Component basis, how each of the Key Guidelines identified in the Spreadsheet is being met (for example by providing documentation to support claims of compliance with certifications or to support the proximity of suppliers to the Park).

The information provided in response to Subfactor 2(a)(3) must tie into the financial projections you provide in Subfactor 4(d). A sample completed Spreadsheet is included in Appendix D to this Prospectus for the sole purpose of illustrating how mechanically to fill out the Spreadsheet.

Key Guidelines from Muir Woods Café Prospectus Exhibit A, Attachment A

KEY GUIDELINES		
FOOD OR BEVERAGE TYPE		**GUIDELINES**
PRODUCE		Environmentally Preferable (USDA Certified Organic) Proximity to Park
PROTEIN	**Beef/Pork/Chicken**	Healthy (no added hormones, antibiotics, rBGH, GMO) High Animal Welfare Standards
	Fish and Other Seafood	Environmentally Preferable (Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch – Green Item)
	Dairy	Environmentally Preferable (USDA Certified Organic) Proximity to Park High Animal Welfare Standards
BEVERAGES	**Other than Coffee/ Tea/Chocolate**	
	Coffee/Tea/ Chocolate	Environmentally Preferable (USDA Certified Organic, Shade Grown) Fairly or Cooperatively Traded
	Water	Environmentally Preferable (not provided in non-reusable bottles)
DRY GOODS/STAPLES/ CONDIMENTS	***Includes baked goods (e.g. pastries, breads, etc.)***	Environmentally Preferable (USDA Certified Organic)

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN THE KEY GUIDELINES	
PROXIMATE: Items (season fare in the case of produce) originating from the closest practicable source so as to minimize energy used in transport.	Provide actual distance from supplier to the Park
FAIRLY OR COOPERATIVELY TRADED: Between producers, retailers, and consumers.	Certified by "Trans Fair USA"
ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE: Products or services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose; including foods that are organic inasmuch as possible.	USDA Certified Organic
HIGH ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS: In both production and transport of meats.	No CAFO is the key principle. Certified "Animal Welfare Approved", "Certified Human Raised and Handled" or similar
HEALTHY FOODS: As part of a balanced diet and does not contain any of the following:	Does not contain added hormones, added antibiotics, bovine growth hormone (rBGH), genetically modified organisms (GMO), high fructose corn syrup, artificial trans fats, any irradiation

APPENDIX D
ASILOMAR STATE BEACH & CONFERENCE GROUNDS RFP (2008)

Asilomar Conference Grounds RFP, p. 19:

Healthy Foods Initiative
An important goal of this contract is the promotion of a healthy lifestyle in an environmentally sustainable manner. Provide a plan for conforming to the healthy foods requirements of the Sample Concession Contract, Paragraph 7J, and Use of Premises. Your proposal should include a plan for educating visitors about how to select healthy, locally, and sustainably grown foods. Educational programs may include cooking demonstrations, oral presentations, written information, or other forms of interpretation.

Sample Concession Contract, Paragraph 7J:

J. HEALTHY FOODS INITIATIVE: As the primary providers of food products in California State Parks, participation by concessionaires in the State's efforts to promote healthy and sustainable food practices is critical. To that end and in accordance with State's mission to "provide for the health" of Californians, Concessionaire shall promote the importance of healthy, locally and sustainably grown, organic foods from California, and shall use sustainable practices, organic ingredients, and recycled products whenever possible. These practices shall include the following:

1) To the extent possible, Concessionaire shall develop a network of local farmers and ranchers who are dedicated to sustainable agriculture and can assure a steady supply of pure and fresh ingredients from California.

2) Concessionaire shall offer a selection of food and beverage items that conform to the definition of "healthy" foods as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 9, Section 317 and Title 21, Section 101.

3) Concessionaire shall offer a selection of beverages with no sugar added, such as bottled water, natural fruit juices, and vegetable juice.

4) Concessionaire shall provide food products grown in California that are as pure and natural as possible, without synthetic additives, pollutants, or unnecessary packaging and marketing.

5) Concessionaire shall work with State to develop interpretive materials and programs that demonstrate the vital role of food in human culture, and how food affects quality of life.

6) To the extent possible, Concessionaire shall offer interpretive demonstrations regarding the sound and sustainable production of food and healthful and traditional means of cooking.

APPENDIX E
SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRACTICES: DEFINITIONS AND IMPACTS

Sustainable food production and service aim to minimize local and global environmental pollution and reduce resource consumption. Below are some examples of sustainable food practices referred to within this report.

Local sourcing reduces transportation emissions and directly supports local farmers. Food transportation constitutes a large proportion of America's energy footprint; combined, food processing and transportation consume about 12 percent of total energy used in the United States.[35]

Organic production methods for grains and produce avoid the use of synthetic pesticides, petroleum-based fertilizers, and sewage sludge based fertilizers. These practices prevent agricultural runoff and pollution, mitigate health risks to consumers and farm workers, and decrease dependence on fossil fuels. In addition, the National Organic Program prohibits the use of genetic engineering and ionizing radiation.

USDA Organic poultry, eggs, meat, and dairy products confront environmental and animal welfare issues. Products that are labeled as USDA Certified Organic come from animals that were not given growth hormones or unnecessary antibiotics. This in turn eliminates human consumption of these hormones and reduces the threat of breeding dangerous antibiotic-resistant bacteria that regular administration of antibiotics in healthy animals creates.[36]

Sustainably raised and caught seafood sourcing ensures that food concessions are not contributing to overfishing or overuse of ocean resources. The Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch ranks seafood options in green, yellow, and red lists. The green list choices are abundant, well managed, and fished or farmed in environmentally friendly ways. Seafood on the "red list" are overfished and/or fished or farmed in ways that harm other marine life or the environment.[37] Fish sourced from fisheries certified by the Marine Stewardship Council, which "maintain healthy populations of targeted species, protect the integrity of ecosystems, are well managed and balance biological, social and commercial interests."[38]

Reductions in waste, energy, and water footprints can be achieved by changing food and beverage concession operations. By investing in Energy Star approved ovens, refrigerators, and stoves, operators can save energy and utility costs. Eliminating bottled water sales in parks reduces waste and the greenhouse gas emissions produced during the manufacture and transportation of bottled water. The Pacific Institute estimates that in 2006, about 17 million barrels of oil were used to make plastic water bottles, bottling water produced over 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide, and 3 liters of water were needed to produce a single liter of bottled water.[39] Recycling and composting can divert huge amounts of operations' waste from landfills; for instance, only 15 percent of Muir Woods' waste and 27 percent of Yellowstone's waste goes into landfills. Compostable waste can also be resold to local farmers, providing all-natural fertilizer for their crops.

35 Source: D. Pimentel et al., 2008.

36 Sources: USDA, "Organic Food Standards and Labels: The Facts"; and sustainabletable.org.

37 Source: Monterey Bay Aquarium Online Seafood Watch Guide for Sustainable Seafood Choices.

38 Source: Marine Stewardship Council.

39 Pacific Institute, "Bottled Water and Energy."

APPENDIX F
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS REPORT

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APPENDIX G
RESOURCES AND LINKS

National Park Service Resources

National Park Service: http://www.nps.gov

NPS Statistical Abstract 2009: http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2010/tables/10s1215.xls

NPS Commercial Services: http://www.concessions.nps.gov/

Countryside Initiative: http://www.cvcountryside.org

Cuyahoga Valley National Park: http://www.nps.gov/cuva

Muir Woods National Monument: http://www.nps.gov/muwo

Martin Van Buren National Historic Site: http://www.nps.gov/mava

Mount Rushmore National Park: http://www.nps.gov/moru

Yellowstone National Park: http://www.nps.gov/yell

Conservation Study Institute, Stewardship Begins with People: An Atlas of Places, People, and Handmade Products: http://open.nat.gov.tw/OpenFront/report/show_file.jsp?sysId=C09801968&fileNo=002

California State Parks Resources

California State Parks: http://www.parks.ca.gov

Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=566

Concessioner Resources

Aramark Corporation: http://www.aramark.com

Forever Resorts "Forever Earth" site: http://foreverearth.net/

Muir Woods Trading Company: http://www.muirwoodstradingcompany.com/

Vail Resorts "Appetite for Life": http://www.vailresorts.com/CORP/info/appetite-for-life.aspx

Xanterra Parks and Resorts: http://www.xanterra.com/Environmental-Action-364.html

Sustainable Food Resources

American Dietetic Association: http://www.eatright.org/

CNN All About: Food and Fossil Fuels: http://edition.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/asiapcf/03/16/eco.food.miles/

Community Food Security Coalition: http://www.foodsecurity.org/index.html

Consumer Reports Greener Choices: http://www.greenerchoices.org/

The Daily Green's New Green Cuisine: http://www.thedailygreen.com/healthy-eating/

Danger of Antibiotics: http://innovation.edf.org/page.cfm?tagid=31088

Department of the Interior Environmental Award for Zion Green Team: http://www.doi.gov/greening/awards/2009/2009_NPS_Zion.html

Family Farmed: http://antibioticsaction.com/the_issue

Federal Trade Commission Enforcement Policy on Food Advertising: http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/policystmt/ad-food.shtm

Food Bank for New York City: http://www.foodchange.org/

Functional Food Guide Pyramid: http://www.med.umich.edu/mfit/nutrition/knowhow/pdfs/FunctionalFoodPyramid.pdf

Green Restaurants Association: http://www.dinegreen.com

Greenway Conservancy: http://www.rosekennedygreenway.org/visit/food.htm

Heller, Martin C., and Gregory A. Keoleian. *Life Cycle-Based Sustainability Indicators for Assessment of the U.S. Food System*. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan, 2000: 40.

Marine Stewardship Council: http://www.scscertified.com/fff/fisheries-msc.php

National Academy of Sciences and National Research Council Joint Board on Agriculture, *Toward Sustainable Agricultural Systems in the 21st Century*.

Organic Center: http://www.organic-center.org/

Organic Foods Production Act of 1990: http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5060370&act=nopgeninfo

Pacific Institute, "Bottled Water and Energy: A Fact Sheet": http://www.pacinst.org/topics/water_and_sustainability/bottled_water/bottled_water_and_energy.html

D. Pimentel et al., *Energy Efficiency and Conservation for Individual Americans: Environment*, *Development and Sustainability*, DOI 10.1007/s10668-007-9128-x (2008).

Seafood Watch: http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/sfw_recommendations.aspx

Sustainable Table: www.sustainabletable.org

Union of Concerned Scientists, Is Bottled Water Better?: http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/greentips/is-bottled-water-better.html

United Nations Environment Programme's annual *Global Environment Outlook:* http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/

USDA, *Agricultural Statistics*, 2007 (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 2007).

USDA Organic Certification: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=ORGANIC_CERTIFICATIO&navtype=RT&parentnav=AGRICULTURE

USDA Organic Labeling Standards: http://www.gulfbend.org/poc/view_doc.php?type=doc&id=9679&cn=281

USDA Federal Food Labeling Guidelines for Meat and Poultry Products: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/pdf/labeling_requirements_guide.pdf

Yale Sustainable Food Project: http://www.yale.edu/sustainablefood/

ABOUT US

The Institute at the Golden Gate

Fort Baker | Sausalito, California | (415) 561-3560 | www.instituteatgoldengate.org

The Institute at the Golden Gate advances environmental preservation and global sustainability by facilitating cross-sector dialogue and collaboration, encouraging new partnerships, and promoting action. The Institute is a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy in partnership with the National Park Service. Working alongside Cavallo Point – The Lodge at the Golden Gate, the Institute convenes and collaborates with nonprofit, for-profit, and government groups to broker long-term relationships focused on driving environmental change in an exceptional and inspirational setting at Fort Baker.

Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

Fort Mason | San Francisco, California | (415) 561-3000 | www.parksconservancy.org

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy is the nonprofit membership organization created to preserve the Golden Gate National Parks, enhance the experiences of park visitors, and build a community dedicated to conserving the parks for the future. The Conservancy is an authorized "cooperating association" of the National Park Service and is one of more than 70 such nonprofit organizations working with national parks around the country.

National Park Service

www.nps.gov

National Park Service is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior charged with managing the preservation and public use of America's most significant natural, scenic, historic, and cultural treasures. The NPS manages the Golden Gate National Parks, as well as 391 other parks across the United States.

About the Author

Sara Mills is a graduate student at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business and School of Natural Resources and the Environment. As a fellow with the Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise, Sara is interested in economic drivers for socially and environmentally responsible businesses. Sara holds a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies from Georgetown University and previously worked as an energy and environmental policy analyst.

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The Institute at the Golden Gate *Food for the Parks* Initiative

The Institute at the Golden Gate's *Food for the Parks* initiative aims to help expand the availability of nutritious, local, organic, fresh food in parks nationwide by drawing connections between sustainable food service and park values and by fostering collaboration and partnerships. To start a dialogue on the state of food in parks, this case study report represents a first step in connecting the work that many parks and concessioners have done independently. The Institute at the Golden Gate intends to expand this report as it explores additional cases.

In spirit, national leadership and individual park superintendents fully support food sustainability goals. In practice, there are unavoidable challenges to the immediate implementation of sustainable food programs. *Food for the Parks* works in partnership with NPS and other state parks to understand and overcome these obstacles. *Food for the Parks* will help NPS leadership develop and implement policies that will allow all parks to prioritize the purchase and delivery of sustainable food. The *Food for the Parks* program will provide a model for connecting large-scale food policy change in the park service and other food providers in the United States and beyond.

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