



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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National Park Service News Release

For Immediate Release
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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AWARDS CONTRACT FOR STRUCTURAL STUDY ON GATEWAY ARCH

*Study is part of the ongoing assessment and preservation of the
Gateway Arch at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial*

SAINT LOUIS, MO. (September 20, 2010) - The National Park Service has awarded a contract for a structural study on the Gateway Arch to Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE), a structural engineering firm specializing in the diagnostics of monumental and complex structures. The study is part of the ongoing regular maintenance, inspection and preservation process at the Gateway Arch.

“The National Park Service considers it our highest priority to preserve our national treasure – the Gateway Arch – and to ensure the safety and enjoyment of our visitors,” said Tom Bradley, superintendent, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, which includes the Gateway Arch. “In addition to our regular plan for maintenance and inspection, we are taking proactive steps to understand the long-term maintenance needs of the Arch.”

Review of the Arch’s long-term maintenance requirements began in 2006 when architectural and engineering experts completed a preliminary study on staining and corrosion that had become evident. The study recommended further investigation and the completion of a Historic Structure Report (HSR), which was funded in 2008 and completed in summer 2010. Historic Structure Reports are regularly completed by the National Park Service on historic properties across the country as part of ongoing preservation planning.

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In addition to serving as a basis for planning future preservation efforts, the HSR records existing conditions. “We are proud to say the Arch is structurally safe according to the Historic Structure Report,” said Bradley. “In fact, the Arch has been awarded the highest mark given in government structural assessment.”

Similar to the 2006 study, the HSR also offered preliminary observations on the staining and corrosion, outlined potential issues that warranted further attention and recommended a more in-depth follow-up study, which WJE will launch in November 2010.

The objective of the study is to gather data about the condition of the Arch to enable experts to develop and implement the right long-term solutions. “Because the Arch did not come with an owner’s manual, it is imperative that we seek the input of leading engineers and other experts to ensure that any potential problems are accurately identified, classified and repaired,” said Bradley. “We want to make certain we don’t rush to solutions that, ultimately, may do more harm than good.”

The studies are part of the National Park Service’s commitment to the maintenance and improvement of the Gateway Arch and the entire Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, which also include those improvements ultimately identified through the design competition. “The National Park Service is committed to the preservation and protection of the Gateway Arch, which includes undertaking this follow-up study and acting on its recommendations, as well as implementing improvements to the Arch grounds as a result of the design competition,” said Bradley.

About WJE

Founded over 50 years ago, WJE pioneered the practice of building forensics and structural diagnostics. Current staff includes leaders in fields such as structural engineering, architecture and material science. WJE has extensive experience in the diagnostics of monumental and complex structures, including the following significant projects:

- Aloha Stadium - Honolulu Hawaii
- San Jacinto Monument - Houston
- Amoco Building - Chicago
- Chicago Tribune Tower
- Nebraska State Capitol

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