

Alcatraz Officer's Club  
Structural Stabilization of Historic Ruin  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area, California



CLIENT

National Park Service

STRUCTURE

The Alcatraz "Officers Club" was built in 1910 during the time that the U.S. Army used Alcatraz Island as a military post. The building initially was used as a post exchange. In 1916, the lower story of the building was enclosed to provide space for recreational activities.

In 1933, Alcatraz Island was transferred to the Bureau of Prisons, and the building became the Officer's Club. In 1963, the federal penitentiary was shut down, and the building remained closed until 1970.

CHALLENGE

During the Native American occupation of the island in 1970, a fire broke out in the Officer's Club, entirely destroying the interior. The concrete walls and columns survived the fire and remain standing today. Concerned about the high seismicity of the area and ongoing deterioration, the National Park Service retained WJE to evaluate the ruins and develop structural stabilization measures for this historic structure. The stabilization measures were required to support the building in its current condition as a ruin and also to be incorporated, without being visible, into a possible future restoration.

SCOPE OF SERVICE

- Evaluate the general condition of the concrete using non-destructive methods
- Perform field investigation to identify existing conditions that affect the stabilization design
- Perform a lateral analysis of the ruins
- Develop a structural stabilization solution
- Prepare construction documents for the structural stabilization

SOLUTION

- Developed a structural stabilization using structural steel
- Prepared detailing and specifications for the bracing to be durable within the ruin in the exposed marine environment
- Designed the stabilization to mimic the original shape of the heavy timber roof and floor framing
- Detailed the stabilization so that it could be incorporated into a potential future restoration

