Cultural Resource Management
U.S. National Park Service

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Cultural Resource Management

The National Park Service will protect, preserve, and foster appreciation of the cultural resources in its custody and demonstrate its respect for the peoples traditionally associated with those resources through appropriate programs of research, planning, and stewardship.

Cultural Resources: Tangible and intangible aspects of cultural systems, both living and dead, that are valued by or representative of a given culture or that contain information about a culture.

Effigy Mounds National Monument

Independence National Historical Park
**Culture/Nature:** Natural resources such as fish, clean water, and plant materials may be considered as cultural resources if they support a way of life.

Salmon returning to the Elwha River, Olympic National Park

Musselshell Meadows, Nez Perce National Historical Park
NPS Cultural Resources Classifications

• Archeological Resources
• Cultural Landscapes
• Ethnographic Resources
• Historic and Prehistoric Structures
• Museum Collections

Fort Monroe National Monument
Archeological Resources are the sites and material remains of past human life or activities which are of archeological interest such as tools, pottery, rock carvings, and human remains.

Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site

Jamestown, Colonial National Historical Park

Petrified Forest National Park

Biscayne National Park
Cultural Landscapes represent the combined works of nature and man. They are geographic areas, including both cultural and natural resources associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.
Ethnographic Resources are resources of cultural significance to the peoples traditionally associated with them.

Historic Salmon Drying Rack, Brooks Camp
Katmai National Park and Preserve

Chaco Culture National Historical Park
Historic and Prehistoric Buildings are created principally to provide shelter for human activities.
Historic and Prehistoric Structures are functional constructions made for purposes other than human shelter

Sheep Shearing Pens
John Day Fossil Beds NM

Cairn, Mount Rainier National Park
Museum Objects are material things possessing functional, aesthetic, cultural symbolic, and or scientific value, usually movable by nature or design. NPS maintains both cultural and natural collections.
The National Park Service manages cultural resources in every unit of the National Park System.
The majority of the National Park System’s units were designated to commemorate and preserve nationally significant events, people, and places.

Ellis Island

Clara Barton National Historic Site

Cesar E. Chavez National Monument

Tuskegee Airman NHS

Saint Gaudens National Historical Park
The National Park Service tells stories and manages resources that span thousands of years from early sites of human habitation to the 1960s civil rights movements.

Arlington Man Site, Channel Islands National Park

Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site
The National Park Service manages

• 2,000,000 prehistoric and historic archaeological sites
• 27,000 historic and pre-contact structures
• 2100 Cultural Landscapes
• 3,500 statues, monuments and memorials
• 167,000,000 million objects and archival documents
The National Park Service manages cultural resources within a national framework of historic preservation and environmental laws, proclamations, executive orders, regulations, standards and guidelines that provide the foundation for our management policies.
This framework mandates a high level of stewardship for cultural resources, while providing the flexibility to address the diversity of cultural resources within the national park system.
U.S. Laws, Standards, and Management Policies that guide NPS cultural resource management

- The Antiquities Act (1906)
- The National Park Service Organic Act (1916)
- The Historic Sites Act (1935)
- The National Historic Preservation Act (1966)
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990)
- Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines
National Park Service Organic Act (1916)

• Mandates the preservation of the “historic sites” within the parks, while providing for their enjoyment by present and future generations of Americans.

• This dual mandate creates challenges for the preservation of cultural resources. Cultural resources are finite and subject to deterioration from age, consumptive use, and exposure to the environment.
National Historic Preservation Act 1966

• Establishes a federal-state-tribal-local government partnership to carry out the national preservation program

• Directs all Federal Agencies to establish historic preservation programs to protect historic properties under their jurisdiction (Section 110)

• Requires federal agencies to consult with interested parties on the potential effects of proposed federal undertakings on historic properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (Section 106)

• Establishes the National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the National Park Service
NPS Management Policies outline a process of research, planning, and stewardship for parks to manage their cultural resources.

NPS Director’s Orders and Handbooks provide specific guidance and technical information to support these policies.
Research: The NPS conducts an interdisciplinary program of research into the cultural resources of each park. Research goals include:

• Providing a systematic, adequate, and current information base representing park cultural resources and traditionally associated peoples in support of planning, management, and operations.

• Ensuring appropriate protection, preservation, treatment, and interpretation of cultural resources, employing the best current scholarship.

• Developing appropriate technologies and methods for monitoring, protecting, preserving, and treating cultural resources.
Significance: The National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation

Objects, sites, districts and buildings:
A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

Boott Mills, Lowell National Historic Park
U.S.S. Arizona, Pearl Harbor
National Register Criterion B

Associated with the lives of significant persons in our past

Harriet Tubman National Historic Site
John F. Kennedy National Historic Site
National Register Criterion C

Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or

Represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

Parterre at Hampton National Historic Site

Visitor Center, Dinosaur National Monument
National Register Criterion D

D. Have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Ice patch archeology, Glacier National Park

Denali National Park
Park Baseline Inventories and Documents

- Historic Resource Studies and National Register of Historic Places nomination forms
- Archeological Sites Management Information System, Research Designs, and Reports
- National Catalog of Museum Objects
- List of Classified Structures (Historic Structures)
- Cultural Landscape Inventories and Reports
- Ethnographic Resources Inventories and Reports
Planning: identify options for protecting and preserving resources, using information on:

- The significance and integrity of the resource
- Potential threats such as fire, pests, human activities and environmental impacts such as climate change
- The feasibility of proposed treatment options (preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, reconstruction)
- Available resources (funding, materials, lifecycle issues, technical skills) and park priorities.
Stewardship

- Stewardship is the implementation phase of this cultural resource management process.
- Proposed treatments are implemented and documented in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.
- Conditions are monitored
- Adverse effects are avoided or mitigated when possible
- When loss is unavoidable, resources are documented to create a permanent record of the cultural information they contain.
Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation

The four standards for historic buildings and structures illustrate the basic NPS approach to managing cultural resources... protecting and preserving the structure, form, original materials, and location of an building, structure, object, landscape or site is the preferred treatment.

• Preservation
• Rehabilitation
• Restoration
• Reconstruction
**Preservation**: For buildings, structures, and landscapes, the preferred treatment is preservation, maintaining the resource in good condition and retaining as much original fabric as possible.
Rehabilitation of buildings, structures and landscapes for continued or new use involves bringing them up to good condition while maintaining character-defining features and replacing deteriorated materials with the same or similar materials.

Rehabilitation of Carpenter’s Shop at Cane River Creole National Historical Park
**Restoration** involves major work to restore a building, structure or landscape after severe damage or to its original period of significance.

Pu‘ukohola Heiau National Historic Site
Restoring the Heiau by traditional Native Hawaiian methods after an earthquake.
Reconstruction is permitted if directed by Congress or if critical to understanding the site. It must be accomplished following strict guidelines requiring adequate documentation and accurate materials and workmanship.
Superintendent’s Role in Cultural Resource Management

• Superintendents are delegated the responsibility to carry out the requirements of these laws, regulations, and policies within their parks. They are directly accountable to the regional and national NPS directorates.

• Superintendents are directed to work with qualified professionals to ensure that research, planning, and stewardship policies are met.

• Superintendents are responsible for consulting with interested parties and traditionally associated peoples in accordance with laws such as NHPA, NAGPRA, and government-to-government responsibilities under Indian Law.
Interested Parties

• Tribal, state, and local governments
• State and tribal historic preservation officers
• The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
• Other interested federal agencies
• Traditionally associated peoples
• Present-day park neighbors
Traditionally Associated Peoples

Those peoples whose cultural systems or ways of life have an association with park resources and values that predates the establishment of the park. Examples:

• Native Alaskans
• American Indians
• Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders
• Hispanic and African Americans
• Acadians
Olympic National Park and Elwha River Restoration: Consultation requirements

The restoration of the river and its salmon runs had the potential to affect:

• Fish populations, river flows and banks, historic dams listed on the National Register of Historic Places and unknown numbers of archeological sites and ethnographic resources inundated behind the dams

• Interested parties andTraditionally Associated People affected – Federally-recognized tribes, neighboring communities, state and federal agencies, national and regional preservation and conservation organizations
List of On-line Sites for Further Information


President’s Advisory Council on Historic Preservation:  www.achp.gov

National Trust for Historic Preservation:  www.savingplaces.org

State and Local Historic Preservation Websites