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**PRESERVING CULTURAL AND HISTORIC
LANDSCAPES: DEVELOPING STANDARDS**

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Introduction and Overview

At last count, the National Park Service is made up of 320 units, of which approximately two-thirds are categorized under some form of historical designation. Each of these historical units has a setting or landscape ranging from a grand vista to a small lawn or garden. We in the Park Service have been aware of these landscapes for quite some time, but only recently have we begun focusing our attention on the many elements that comprise (either conspicuously or subtly) those landscapes in which we work.

While the Park Service has been engaged for many years in the preservation of historic structures, we have not given the same attention to cultural and historic landscapes. True, in our efforts with these structures, we have considered, in various degrees, scenes, vistas, views, and historic grounds reports. However, all of these are merely components of the larger landscape, and it is important that the Park Service now begin to address itself to the management of its diverse cultural and historic landscapes.

In many ways, dealing with landscapes presents problems similar to those dealing with structures. In most cases, however, landscapes are more complicated than structures, and present more variables in their management and preservation. A major difference between the two is the intrinsic dynamic nature of a landscape, as opposed to the more static qualities of a structure. It is necessary to envision and manage landscapes as whole entities, which often encompass such elements as landforms, plant materials, and location of structures. Landscapes, as well as those sites associated with specific structures, may be important cultural and historic resources to be carefully managed and preserved.

The standards which are presented below represent only one section of an on-going project in this area. Before one can implement these standards, it is crucial to identify and evaluate the landscapes under discussion. Through this process, it will be possible to ascertain which landscapes are significant enough to warrant preservation-oriented management, and which are not. These two procedural steps, identification and evaluation, are currently being developed as one component in the need to critically view the Park Service's role in cultural and historic landscape preservation. The standards presented here are intended to be applied only after appropriate and significant landscapes have been identified and evaluated.

Definitions

Large landscape areas within the National Parks may be broadly classified under two categories: natural landscapes and cultural landscapes. Natural landscapes include all of those areas which, although protected or managed through human decisions, are basically in their natural state. These would include so-called wilderness areas, mountain meadows,

and scenic overlooks. Although these places are clearly not free from human influence, they are preserved or maintained in a state which replicates or supports natural ecological systems as closely as possible. These natural landscapes are not within the subject or scope of this discussion.

The second category has been termed cultural landscapes. These areas clearly represent or reflect the patterns of settlement or use of the landscape, as well as the continuum and evolution of cultural attitudes, norms, and values towards the land. It may be said that these areas, as opposed to natural landscapes, are clearly human-influenced and manipulated. Nevertheless, cultural landscapes are formed, for the most part, of the same fabric and material which makes up natural areas: landforms, trees, shrubs, sky, mountains, plains, rivers, streams, and weather patterns, to name but a few. Cultural landscapes are also shaped somewhat by ecological processes and events beyond the control of human managers. However, they exhibit one important difference from natural landscapes: cultural landscapes visibly portray man's lasting impact on the land, in a variety of forms.

There is a further breakdown of the cultural landscape category--historic landscapes. These are cultural landscapes which are strongly associated with a particular person or event of historical significance. Such might include a battlefield, a treaty site, or a former President's personal garden. Designed landscapes, such as gardens or parks, that are associated with important landscape architects or vernacular designers are also included in the category of historic landscapes.

Historic landscapes are associated with a specific date, time, or person. Generally, their management should be stricter than the management of cultural landscapes which are more representative than specific. It may often be necessary in a historic landscape to duplicate plant materials exactly, while plant materials in a cultural landscape may be chosen for such characteristic qualities as color, shape, and massing that approximate the original material in the landscape. Management of cultural landscapes would be aimed at preserving the accurate historic materials as nearly as possible. In both cases, the integrity of the landscape is an overriding factor in management preservation decisions.

Potential Standards of General Treatment and Use for Cultural and Historic Landscape Preservation

The following proposals for standards of general treatment and use for cultural and historic landscape preservation are built upon the operational definitions offered above. They are part of the on-going process of understanding and controlling our cultural landscape, and are not intended to be an inclusive means to the preservation of these areas of national heritage. Standards for cultural landscapes apply to historic landscapes as well, except where stricter treatment is required. In those instances, an additional statement has been added for historic landscapes.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to allow for uses for the landscape which have no, or minimal adverse effect upon the landscape. With historic landscapes, these uses shall require no or minimal alteration to the landscape, and no permanent change which alters the historic integrity of the landscape.
2. Use of the landscape shall be regulated to eliminate or prevent both immediate and long-range damage to any aspects, elements, or sections of the landscape which may drastically alter its cultural milieu. With historic landscapes, this regulation shall be especially sensitive to topography, plant materials, surrounding views and vistas, and their historic contents and integrity.
3. The distinguishing qualities or character of the landscape, including but not limited to, walkways, significant vegetation, earthworks or forms, shall not be removed, destroyed, or altered in any manner which will negate the cultural value or resource of the landscape.

With historic landscapes, a compelling case shall be established for the removal or destruction of any historic material or distinctive landscape feature or element.

4. All landscapes shall be recognized as a product of their own time, as well as of an important cultural process. Alterations which destroy the authenticity of the place and the process of the place are prohibited. Furthermore, with historic landscapes, alterations, manipulations or transformations that have no historical basis are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the introduction of historically inappropriate plant materials, paving, and fencing.

5. Changes which have taken place in the course of time may be further evidence of the cultural importance of a landscape. These changes shall be recognized for their importance and shall be respected.

With historic landscapes, these changes may have significance in their own right, and this significance, when appropriate to the major historical thrust of the landscape, shall be recognized and respected.

6. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship shall, when possible, be treated with sensitivity and preserved.

With historic landscapes, these features shall be preserved in their original context and form. This shall be done for major design forms, as well for details with regard to intended form, size, and location of plant materials.

7. Deteriorated landscape features, such as walks, gazebos, trees and shrubs shall, whenever possible, be repaired rather than replaced. The operational control of such decisions and actions shall be the maintenance of the cultural integrity of the landscape. Where new material, either man-made or natural, is necessary, it shall in no way inhibit or impinge upon the integrity of the landscape.

With historic landscapes, repairs shall be executed in historically correct procedures. Where new material is necessary, it will match existing fabric in composition, color, design, texture, and, in the case of plant materials, will match the historic species.

8. The cleaning of any landscape structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible and only when such cleaning is required for preservation. Sandblasting, other cleaning methods that damage the historic materials or speed deterioration, and any other as-yet untested cleaning methods shall not be undertaken.

9. All treatment work that may affect surface or subsurface archeological resources shall be coordinated with an archeologist.

10. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to the landscape shall not be discouraged, when such alterations and additions do not significantly alter those features of the landscape that establish its cultural importance. Necessary, but not exclusive, considerations in this regard are plant massing, views, general landscape design, and contextual relationships.

With historic landscapes, such alterations or additions shall be discouraged when they will destroy significant historic, landscape, or cultural materials, especially with regards to contemporary plantings, and when such alterations and additions are not compatible with historic landscape features, such as plant color, massing, and design.

11. New additions or alterations to landscapes shall be done in such a manner that the essential form and integrity of the landscape is unimpaired. The essential form and integrity shall be defined, in this instance, as that aspect of the landscape which most closely represents the cultural values and attitudes from which the landscape derives its significance.

With historic landscapes, this shall be especially so in the replacement of dead or severely damaged plant materials. In such cases as the replacement of plant materials is necessary, the new material shall be chosen for its mature properties which shall match the material being replaced.

12. All landscape maintenance procedures, such as pruning, clipping, planting details and fertilizing, shall be done under currently accepted professional standards. When in doubt, these procedures shall be carried out in a conservative manner.

13. Every reasonable effort shall be made to retain the appropriate cultural or historic use for the landscape, such as agriculture, orchards, woodlots, vegetable gardens and vineyards.

14. Necessary functional requirements, such as parking, pedestrian circulation, storm drainage, and lighting, shall be carried out with sensitivity to its impact upon the landscape. Screening shall be carried out with appropriate considerations of the impact of the screening, as well as the screened, element.

Conclusions

These proposals, as they now stand, represent the beginning stages in developing guidelines and policies for the preservation of cultural and historic landscapes. At this point, several questions arise. Where do we go from here? Obviously, more detail is required in these standards. What are the specifics of landscape preservation? What about restoration, reconstruction, or adaptive re-use? How might such approaches be accomplished within the landscape? These questions are being addressed by some professionals of preservation. It is the application of the work by these individuals to the specific needs of the Park Service which needs further attention.

One area for future exploration is data collection that leads to responsible planning documents. Perception of significant values in the landscape is another area for development. As a continuation of the work presented here, evaluation techniques and criteria for cultural and historic landscapes are currently under preparation.

What else needs to be done? It is important that this material be scrutinized and evaluated. Your comments and suggestions are welcomed. Please address all comments to: F. Ross Holland, Jr., Assistant Director for Cultural Resources, National Park Service.

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