



Name of Property: Eagle Island (Robert E. Peary Summer Home)
City, State: Harpswell, Maine
Period of Significance: 1881-1920
NHL Criteria: 2
NHL Theme: VI. Expanding Science and Technology
 VII. Changing Role of the U.S. in the World Community
 3. Expansion and Imperialism
Previous Recognition: 1971 National Register of Historic Places
National Historic Context: XIII. Science
 B. Earth Science
 1. Physical Geography
 XVIII. Technology (Engineering and Invention)
 J. Earth and Space Exploration

NHL Significance:

- Eagle Island is the property that best represents the life and work of the arctic explorer, Richard E. Peary. His multiple expeditions to the North Pole brought international recognition to the United States at the turn-of-the-nineteenth century, and made him one of the most admired men in America.
- Peary acquired Eagle Island in 1881 and built his house in 1904 on a prominent ledge facing north and the open sea. The rustic simplicity of the house and its island setting reflected the life and work of a man who spent twenty-three years exploring the North Pole and the coast of Greenland.

Integrity:

- The Peary cottage was built in 1904 and enlarged in 1912-1913 following his final expedition to the North Pole. Along with the 1904 caretaker's house, there has been little change since Peary's death in 1920. Only the library/study and museum rooms in the stone bastions, constructed in 1912-1913, have lost historic finishes due to deterioration. These finishes have been reconstructed in the library/study.
- The entire island is a state park, and the only other building is a small visitor's center

being built in the configuration of a long-demolished guest house. There is also a modern dock structure.

Owner of Property: State of Maine, Bureau of Parks and Lands

Acreage of Property: 17

Origins of Nomination: The nomination was submitted by the Maine State Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, which administers the property, with the encouragement of the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission. It was prepared by the historian for the Bureau of Parks and Recreation.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- Public awareness will likely increase visitation to a site that is not accessible by land.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Landmarks Committee Comments: The committee recommended that the names of the four Inuits who were on the expedition be added to the nomination.

Landmarks Committee Recommendation: Designation. Mr. Hoyos moved, Dr. Mills seconded; unanimous approval.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of 12/19/13):

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., State Historic Preservation Officer, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine

Mr. Willard Harris, Director, Maine Bureau of Park and Lands, Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (owner waiver received)

Ms. Elinor Multer, Chair, Harpswell Board of Selectman, Maine (HEO waiver received)

The Honorable Angus S. King, Jr., United States Senator, Maine

Harold G. Rich, President, The Friends of Peary's Eagle Island, Bailey Island, Maine

The Honorable Susan M. Collins, United States Senator, Maine

Advisory Board Recommendation: