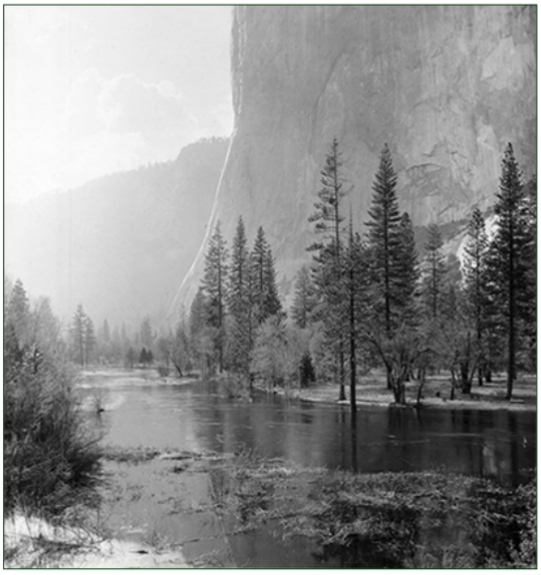
History of

Cultural Landscape Preservation

in the United States

Mount Vernon, first preserved in 1858.



Frederick Law Olmsted advocated for the preservation of Yosemite in 1865.

1858 First Historic Property Preserved

The Ladies of Mount Vernon help to save President George Washington's property in Virginia as one of the first private efforts in the United States to preserve a nationally significant historic property.

1864 First Conservation Book Published

George Perkins Marsh publishes *Man and Nature*. Marsh advocates the idea that human behavior affects the appearance and overall health of the landscape. This work is viewed as the foundation of the modern conservation movement.

1865 Report Issued on Yosemite Conservation

In one of the first writings of its type, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted describes the necessity of providing people contact with wilderness while managing human impact on the environment.

1872 First National Park Established

President Ulysses S. Grant signs legislation establishing the first national park, Yellowstone.

Yellowstone was the world's first national park in 1872.

A garden in Colonial Williamsburg designed in the Colonial Revival style.

Yellowstone became the world's first national park in 1872. Here, Morrison, Sitham, Holte, and Lindsley ski on a trip to Fall River in 1897.

1876 Colonial Revival Garden Movement Begins

The US Centennial marks the beginning of the Colonial Revival Movement in the United States reflecting popular regard for garden design of the US Colonial period. The movement is widely attributed to the outgrowth of interest in Colonial scenes presented at the Philadelphia Centennial International Exposition.

1881 First Reforestation Efforts in the US

Frederick Billings devotes himself to the conservation of his Woodstock, Vermont property, working with George Aitken, to create a model conservation property through forest management practices.

1885 First State Park Established

Niagara Falls in New York becomes the nation's first state park.

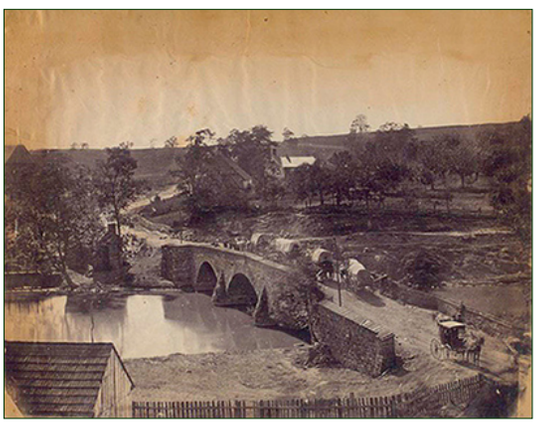
1890 First Scenery Preservation Efforts

Landscape architect Charles Eliot (1859-1897) authors a letter entitled "The Waverly Oaks." Published in *Garden and Forest*, this letter calls for the establishment of an organization to support preservation of scenery in the vicinity of the Massachusetts State House. His efforts result in the establishment of the Trustees of Public Reservations (now The Trustees of Reservations) in the spring of 1891 by the Massachusetts Legislature. It is the oldest regional land trust in the world.

1892 Adirondack Park was Established

Seven years after the creation of the Adirondack Forest

A forest managed by conservation practices at Marsh Billings National Historical Park.



The Burnside Bridge at Antietam National Battlefield.

William Tipton photo of veterans and families at the dedication of the 11th Connecticut monument at Antietam, October 11, 1894. Antietam National Battlefield, Maryland.

Preserve, a bill passed in the state legislature that established Adirondack Park "for the free use of all the people." It protected this New York wilderness from the burning and lumbering that had become an increasing concern after 1850.

1892 First Civil War Battlefields Preserved

Congress passes enabling legislation to create Antietam National Battlefield Site and Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

1895 First National Historic Preservation Organization Founded

The American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society was founded. Although the name suggests a national scope, it focused primarily on New York State parks and historic sites.

1906 Antiquities Act Passed

Passage of the Antiquities Act allows the President to declare National Monuments, thus preserving historic properties as well as natural wonders.

1910 First Regional Historic Preservation Organization is Founded

William Sumner Appleton, Jr. founds the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now Historic New England), the oldest and largest regional preservation organization in the United States.

1916 The National Park Service Established

Congress passes the Organic Act, establishing the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior "...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects therein."

President Theodore Roosevelt's conservation ethic was influenced by his trip to Yosemite with John Muir.

1925 Landscape Recognized as a Physical Record of Culture

UC Berkeley Cultural Geographer Carl Sauer publishes *The Morphology of Landscape*. In this work, he sought to demonstrate that nature does not create culture, but instead, culture working with and on nature, creates ways-of-life. He considered human impacts on the landscape to be a manifestation of culture. Therefore, he argued, in order to understand a culture, a geographer must learn to read the landscape.

Arrowhead emblem of the National Park Service.

1928 First Large-scale Historic Landscape Restoration Effort

American landscape architect Arthur Shurcliff began the restoration of the landscape of Colonial Williamsburg in the Colonial Revival style, a pioneering work of early landscape preservation. Although this was preceded by other notable restoration efforts, such as the Gettysburg Battlefield (1864) and Nelson House in Yorktown (1915), it was the first such effort based on academic standards of restoration.

Charleston, SC was the first US city with a historic district zoning ordinance.

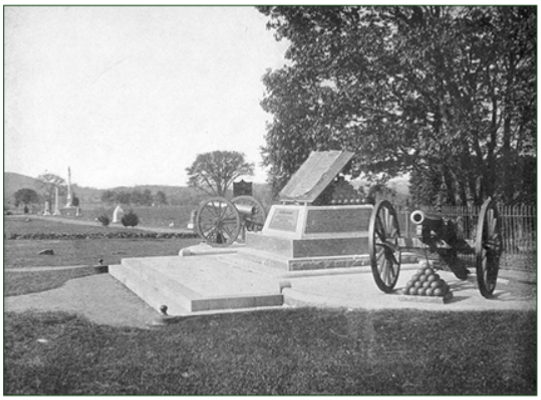
1931 First Historic Preservation and Planning Review Board Created

The City of Charleston proposed a historic district zoning ordinance in October of 1931. This was new blend of historic preservation and planning with a review board to examine and propose solutions to design problems of residents in the historic district boundary.

1933 First Federal Preservation Treatment Efforts

Congress authorizes President Franklin Roosevelt's proposed Civilian Conservation Corps, a labor force for early conservation efforts, including the restoration of federally-owned historic properties.

The CCC labor force replanted and rebuilt historic properties in the NPS.



Gettysburg National Battlefield. Added to the NPS in 1933.

Fort Jefferson designated a National Monument in 1935 under the Historic Sites Act.

1933 National Parklands and Federal Historic Sites Centralized Under NPS

President Roosevelt signs executive orders transferring the War Department's parks and monuments as well as those held by the Forest Service and the District of Columbia to the National Park Service.

1933 First Systematic Documentation of Historic Properties

The Historic American Building Survey (HABS) is created to document America's architectural heritage and to provide employment for Depression Era architects.

1935 Historic Sites Act Passed

Passage of the Historic Sites Act leads to a federal policy to preserve historic properties for public use. Historic preservation becomes a primary focus of the NPS.

1930s First Systematic Documentation of Historic Landscapes

Members of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) participating in the HABS program, complete the Historic American Landscape and Garden Project, which documents 40 historic landscapes in Massachusetts.

1949 The National Trust for Historic Preservation Established

Creation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (National Trust) is chartered by Congress. The National Trust supports the preservation of historic properties in local communities.

1960s Development of Land Trusts and Preservation Easements

A Historic Grounds Report for the Custis Lee Mansion Flower Garden was prepared in 1964.

One of the earliest historic preservation easements was made in the early 1960s to preserve the view shed from Mount Vernon, when local residents became concerned that proposed development on the surrounding area would detract from the natural and historic character of the land.

1960s First NPS Historic Landscape Treatment Plans

Publication of the first "Historic Grounds Reports" for national park historic landscapes.

Penn Station. Its demolition inspired the US historic preservation movement.

1963 Penn Station Demolition Catalyzes Historic Preservation Movement

The decision to replace the New York's Penn Station, designed by McKim, Mead and White, and its subsequent demolition becomes a key moment in the birth of the US historic preservation movement--a movement that came too late to save Penn Station, but galvanized the preservation of Grand Central Terminal in the 1970s.

1966 Passage of the Department of Transportation Act

The creation of the Department of Transportation and the development of a National Transportation Policy called for the section 4(f) "requirement for consideration of park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites in transportation project development."

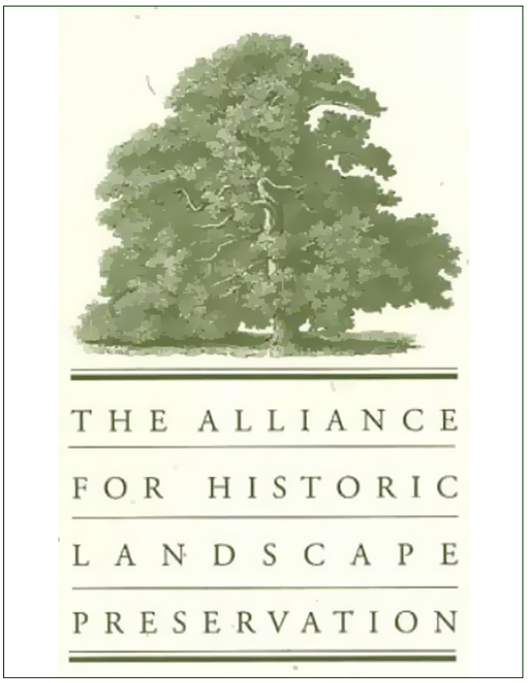
The Locke Historic District in California clearly illustrates a period in the history of Chinese communities in America. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in December of 1990.

1966 The National Historic Preservation Act Passed

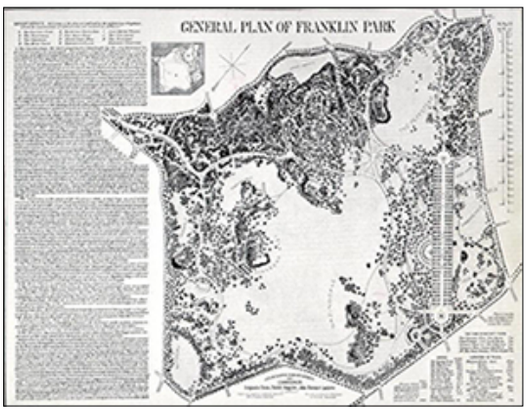
The NHPA's preservation program is conceived as a partnership between the Federal Government, led by the NPS, and the States (now including Indian Tribes and Certified Local Governments). The NHPA also created the National Register of Historic Places, the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, and Section 106 – a legal status for historic preservation in Federal planning.

1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is Passed

Boxley Valley was the first historic vernacular landscape preserved by the NPS.



The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation now operates in over 30 US states, multiple Canadian Provinces, and Europe.



Frederick Law Olmsted's plan for Franklin Park in Boston, MA maintained by the Olmsted Archives.

The National Park Service and other federal agencies are required by NEPA to evaluate environmental impacts of their actions and to involve the public in the decision-making process.

1972 First National River Designated

Buffalo National River in Arkansas is designated as a national park unit and the country's first national river. The river's surrounding land contains indigenous and historic vernacular landscapes.

1973 "Historic Scene" Defined in NPS Administrative Policies

The precursor to the term "cultural landscape," "historic scene" denotes the overall appearance of all historic resources and their surroundings as they were in the historic period.

1976 Tension between Landscape Preservation and Landscape

J. B. Jackson criticizes the practices of landscape preservation in a letter to Landscape Architecture magazine, cautioning that the movement should, "create a sense of time," not a "sterile reconstruction."

1976 NPS Landscape Preservation Guidance Published

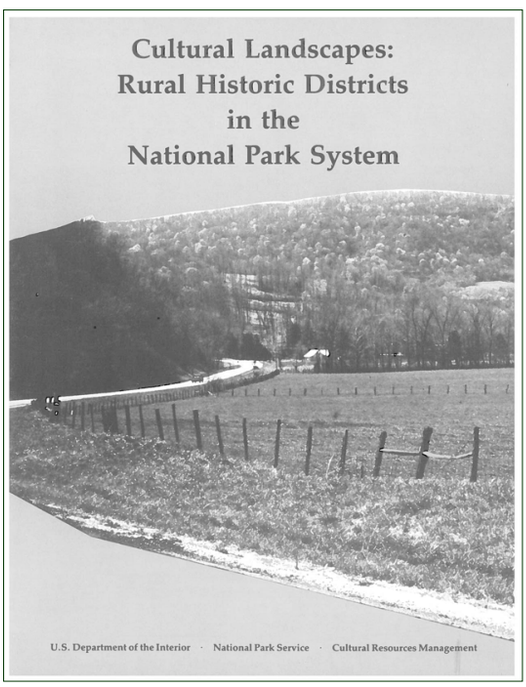
Thomas Kane, founder of the Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation, prepares guidelines on historic landscape preservation for State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) involved with the National Register program.

1978 The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation Established

AHLP is a professional organization that provides a forum for cultural landscape academic study and advancement of the field of landscape preservation.

Central Park, New York was first designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in 1858.

The Sautee Nacoochee Indian Mound within the Nacoochee Valley, GA.



This document provided the first NPS guidance for evaluating the integrity of cultural landscapes.

1979 Historic Design Drawings of the Olmsted Firm Preserved

The language of the 1935 Historic Sites Act is used to preserve and conserve the Olmsted archives. The archives are a foundation for work to preserve historic Olmsted landscapes.

1980 New York's Central Park Conservancy is Formed

The Central Park Conservancy is formed by a group of citizens dedicated to improving the condition of Olmsted's and Vaux's NYC masterpiece. The park was designated a landmark in 1974 by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission. The Conservancy is one of the earliest examples of a public-private partnership for preservation of a public park.

Park conservancies continue to play an active role in supporting many of the large, historic city parks around the country.

1981 The Term "Cultural Landscape" First Codified by NPS

"Cultural landscape" is first defined as a cultural resource type in *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, NPS 28, Release No. 2.

1982 First Preservation Plan for a Rural Historic District Published

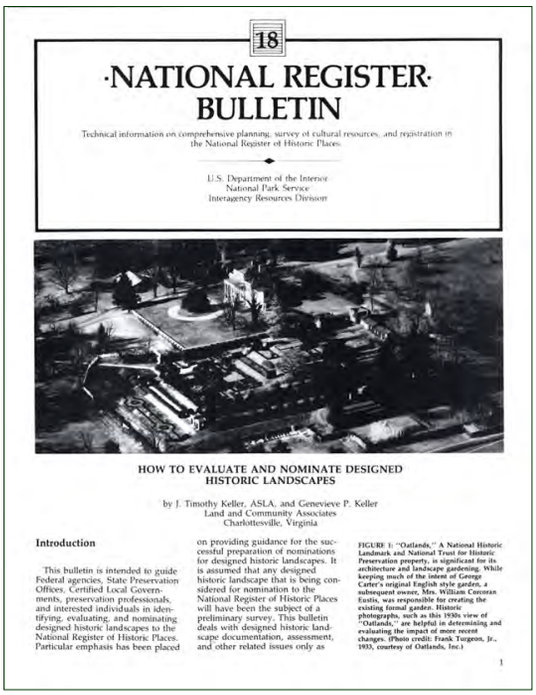
Allen Stovall completes *The Sautee and Nacoochee Valley, A Preservation Study*, a comprehensive plan for the future development of two valleys in Northern Georgia to preserve their natural and cultural qualities.

1984 Guidance Published for Nominating Rural Districts to the National

Cultural Landscapes: Rural Historic Districts in the National Park System is completed by Robert Melnick, Daniel Sponn, and Emma Jane Saxe.

1984 National Heritage Areas Program Established

The lawn of the Tao House Courtyard received subgrade reinforcement for accessibility during treatment implementation.



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·NATIONAL REGISTER·
BULLETIN

Technical information on comprehensive planning, survey of cultural resources, and registration in the National Register of Historic Places

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Interagency Resources Division

HOW TO EVALUATE AND NOMINATE DESIGNED HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

by J. Timothy Keller, ASLA, and Genevieve P. Keller
Land and Community Associates
Charlottesville, Virginia

Introduction

This bulletin is intended to guide Federal agencies, State Preservation Offices, Certified Local Governments, preservation professionals, and interested individuals in identifying, evaluating, and nominating designed historic landscapes to the National Register of Historic Places. Particular emphasis has been placed on providing guidance for the successful preparation of nominations for designed historic landscapes. It is assumed that any designed historic landscape that is being considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places will have been the subject of a preliminary survey. This bulletin deals with designed historic landscape documentation, assessment, and other related issues only as

FIGURE 1: "Oatlands," A National Historic Landmark and National Trust for Historic Preservation property, is significant for its architecture and landscape gardening. While keeping much of the intent of George Carter's original English style garden, a subsequent owner, Mrs. William Corcoran Eustis, was responsible for creating the existing formal garden. Historic photographs, such as this 1930s view of "Oatlands," are helpful in determining and evaluating the impact of more recent changes. (Photo credit: Frank Turgeon, Jr., 1933, courtesy of Oatlands, Inc.)

1

NR Bulletin 18 created a typology of "character defining features" for designed landscapes.

The Olmsted National Historic Site preserves the home, office, and residential landscape of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and the Olmsted Brothers Firm.

The National Heritage Area program is established by Congress to designate places where, "nature, culture, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape."

1985 The Term "Cultural Landscape Report" Codified by NPS

The "cultural landscape report" (CLR) is identified in NPS 28, Release No. 3, as the official NPS planning document for cultural landscape treatment plans.

1986 First CLR Treatment Plan Implemented by NPS

The Tao House courtyard at the Eugene O'Neill Historic Site is rehabilitated to improve accessibility as part of the first CLR treatment plan to be carried out.

1987 Guidance for Nominating Designed Landscapes to the National Register

National Register Bulletin 18: *How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes* is released.

1988 NPS Adopts Management Policy for Cultural Landscapes

The NPS Management Policies address cultural landscapes and include guidance for recognizing their historic, archeological, ethnographic, and design values.

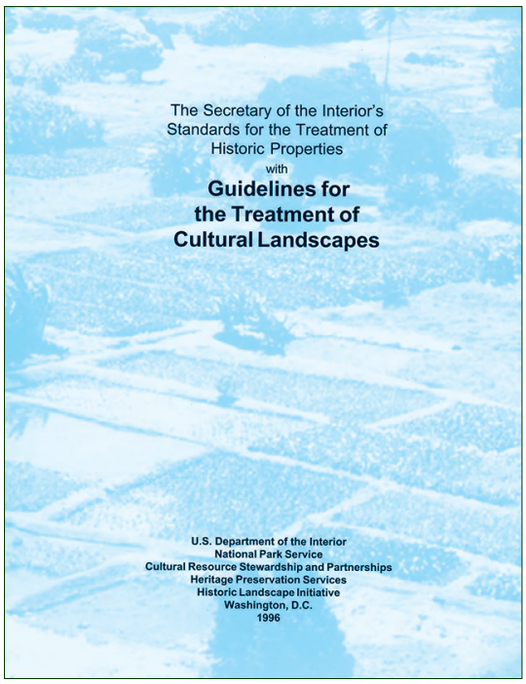
1992 NPS Begins Effort to Inventory Cultural Landscapes in the National

The NPS Cultural Landscape Inventory initiative begins with the design and testing of an inventory method for all cultural landscapes.

1992 The Term "Cultural Landscape" Codified Internationally

Cultural Landscapes are recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO), an agency of the United Nations, as a type of World Heritage Site.



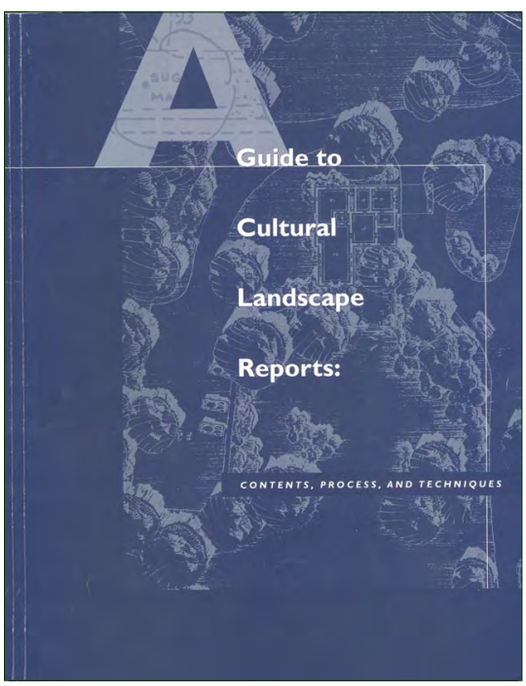
The Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes nests within the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

1992 The Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation Established

The Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation is created within the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, Massachusetts, to guide cultural landscape preservation activities in the northeast United States, within national parks, and with preservation partners.

1995 NPS Released Public Guidance on Cultural Landscape

Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes is published, providing step-by-step guidance for preserving designed and vernacular landscapes to a public audience.



A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports codified CLRs.

1996 Guidance for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes Published

Secretary of the Interior's Standard for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes provides the first professional standards in the US.

1997 The Content of NPS Cultural Landscape Inventories Standardized

A Cultural Landscape Inventory database is released throughout the NPS, providing standardization to the documentation of the history, existing conditions, and evaluation of integrity of cultural landscapes.

1998 The Content of NPS Cultural Landscape Reports Standardized

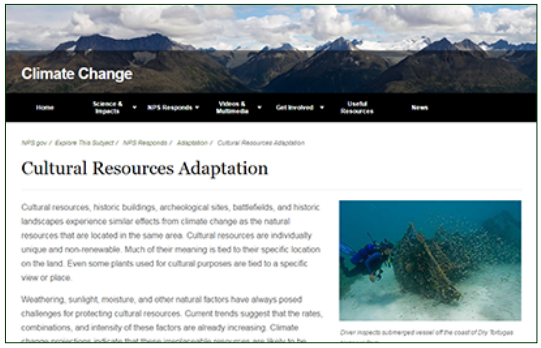
A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process and Techniques is published, standardizing the approach to the preparation of a Cultural Landscape Report as the cultural landscape treatment plan.

The Cultural Landscape Foundation

Logo of The Cultural Landscape Foundation est. in 1998.

The NPS CLI database contains more than 750 inventories.

World War II era Pillbox on Midway Atoll at Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, a World Heritage Site.



The website nps.gov/climatechange provides information on adaptation in Cultural Resources Management.

1998 The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) Established

TCLF is a non-profit organization with a mission to "educate and engage the public to make our shared landscape heritage more visible, identify its value, and empower its stewards."

2000 HALS Created

The Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) is formally established as a permanent federal program.

2002 The NPS CLI Converted into a Web Application

The web version allows for nationwide sharing of cultural landscape inventory data and enhanced analysis of the nation's cultural landscapes.

2010 The First World Heritage Site Cultural Landscape Created in the US

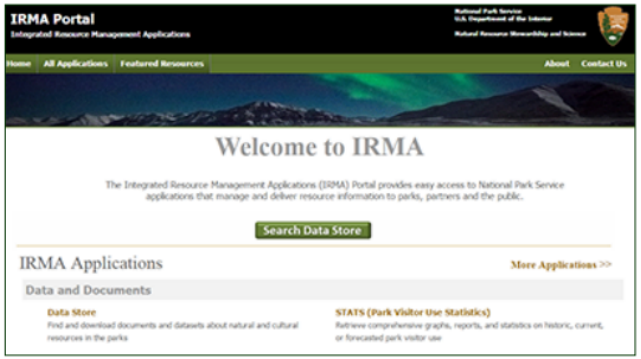
UNESCO designates Papahānaumokuākea as a World Heritage Site.

2013 NPS Cultural Landscapes Mapped Using NPS Cultural Resources GIS

The CR-GIS (Geographic Information Systems) database provides geographic locations of cultural landscape boundaries and features, and enhances cultural landscape planning stewardship within NPS.

2014 Climate Change Response Policy Developed for NPS CRM

Increased attention to climate change impacts on both natural and cultural resources drives the production of



The IRMA DataStore is a public online catalog of NPS natural and cultural resource management documents, including cultural landscapes.

official policies regarding cultural resource management.

2016 Large Body of Knowledge on NPS Cultural Landscapes

To date, 750 Cultural Landscape Inventories and 376 Cultural Landscape Reports have been completed. Many are available for download at https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore

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View of El Capitan as seen from the Merced River, Yosemite National Park, California, ca.1900: Photographer Pierce, C.C. [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via University of Southern California. Libraries and California Historical Society.

Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. Antietam Bridge on the Boonsboro and Sharpsburg Turnpike. Image. Retrieved from The New York Public Library Digital Collections, http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-e7f8-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99

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Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Photographs and Prints Division, The New York Public Library. Civilian Conservation Corps boys putting up a fence, Greene County, Georgia, May 1941. Image. Retrieved from The New York Public Library Digital Collections 1941, http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-f8ef-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99

10. Historic American Buildings Survey, Cervin Robinson, Photographer April 24, 1962, CONCOURSE FROM SOUTHWEST. - Pennsylvania Station, 370 Seventh Avenue, West Thirty-first, Thirty-first-Thirty-third Streets, New York County, NY. Image. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hhh.ny0411/photos.119998p

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Central Park, New York City. ca. 1906. Image. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/96512474/>.

Historic American Buildings Survey, Creator. Nichols-Hardman House, Gazebo, Georgia Highway 17 & Georgia Highway 75, Nacoochee, White County, GA. Documentation Compiled After, 1933. Image. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/ga0064/>.

Nihoa: By G. Wallace of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Pacific Region's (Approaching Nihoa Uploaded by snowmanradio) [CC BY 2.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

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