



Figure 1. Plaque on moss covered rock at Cedarburg Bog NNL, photo by UWM

National Natural Landmark Bronze Plaques

A Guide for Landowners and Managers

National Natural Landmarks (NNL), where appropriate, are recognized with a bronze plaque. The plaque is provided to the landmark by the National Park Service (NPS) and is inscribed with the following text:

Inscription

[NNL NAME]
HAS BEEN DESIGNATED A
NATIONAL
NATURAL LANDMARK
THIS SITE POSSESSES EXCEPTIONAL VALUE
AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE NATION'S NATURAL
HERITAGE AND CONTRIBUTES TO A BETTER
UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENVIRONMENT
[DESIGNATION YEAR]
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Plaque Specs

The NNL plaque weighs 20lbs and measures 16 1/8" x 14 3/8". It is bronze and contains 88% copper. Newly created plaques are covered with a black oxide lacquer and automotive grade clear coat to slow the natural patina process.

Plaque Display

Plaques should be displayed in a secure, public area in a manner suitable to inform visitors of the landmark designation. The plaques are designed to withstand weather, however placing near a steady stream of water, in direct sunlight, or on the ground will age them faster. Landowners display plaques in various creative ways, from inside visitor centers, to outside on large rocks or custom-made pedestals (Figure 2).

Plaque Mounting

The standard mounting for these plaques is concealed with the holes on the back and works best for mounting on brick, stone, granite, and cement surfaces. Plaques can also be adapted for screw mounting, where the holes are on the front of the plaque and go all the way through, but this can only be done for new plaques.

Concealed Mounting Instructions:

- Drill corresponding holes (slightly larger than the ones on the back of the plaque) into the surface plaque will be mounted on.
- Fill the holes with silicone caulk or a similar material.
- Screw the provided studs into the back of the plaque.
- Set the plaque (with studs coming out of the back) into the holes.
- Hold for a few minutes and the plaque will be set in place.



Plaque Cleaning

Plaques can be gently cleaned with a mild solution of dish soap and water as needed. Typically, they do not need much more than that.

Plaque Touch-ups and Repairs

If a plaque is in need of a minor touch up (paint chip, scratch, or minor peeling), landowners can apply a touch-up paint on their own. It is recommended that black oxide paint, which can be found in hardware stores, is used. Black oxide is a conversion coating for ferrous materials, stainless steel, copper and copper-based alloys. The oxide paint should be sprayed onto a brush and gently dabbed on. When dry, the black oxide coat must then be followed by a clear lacquer. This can also be bought at a local hardware store as long as it is lacquer (polyurethane, varnish, and shellac are slightly different). The clear lacquer should be sprayed over the entire plaque surface to seal it.

Some NNLs have been known to spruce up the plaque by spraying it with a black paint and then wiping the lettering so they show through. As long as it is done carefully and the correct types of paint are used, this is

an option if the plaque cannot be removed from its location to send back to the Foundry.

If the repairs are beyond minor, then please contact your Regional Coordinator for other options that could include refurbishment or possible replacement.

Removing a Plaque

Sometimes it may be necessary to remove a plaque either to change its location or to send away for refurbishment. To do this, use a pry bar to gently pull it away from the stone, wall, etc. If that does not work, you can saw behind the plaque and screws to remove it.

Plaque Ownership

Bronze NNL plaques remain the property of the National Park Service after they are presented to the NNL landowner(s). In the unlikely event that landmark designation is removed from a site, the plaque should be returned to the National Park Service.

Additional questions? Please contact your Regional NNL Coordinator. Full contact information can be found on the NNL Program website at www.nps.gov/orgs/1211/contactus.htm.



Figure 2. Examples of plaques displayed at landmark site