



Figure 1. Aquatic turtles at Ichetucknee Springs NNL, Florida.

National Natural Landmarks Program (NNL) Talking Points

The following prepared statements are provided for use in interpretive displays, outreach materials, grant applications, websites, social media posts or any time succinct statements regarding the National Natural Landmarks (NNL) Program and designation are needed.

- The National Natural Landmarks Program recognizes and encourages the conservation of sites that best illustrate the nation's biological and geological heritage. From ancient old-growth cypress forests in the eastern swamps, to the fossil remains of prehistoric mammals laid in volcanic ash, landmarks contain spectacular treasures.
- The National Natural Landmarks Program was established in 1962 by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall and is administered by the National Park Service.
- Over 600 sites have been designated as National Natural Landmarks to-date. There are landmarks in most of the 50 states, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Guam.
- Landmark sites are owned by a variety of public and private land stewards. Landmarks are found within city, county or state parks, wildlife refuges, national forests, nature preserves, or even in someone's backyard.
- Participation in the program is voluntary and all new designations must have owner permission.
- Sites are designated as National Natural Landmarks by the Secretary of the Interior after thorough scientific evaluation. The first designations occurred March 7, 1964, and included Elder Creek and Rancho La Brea in California, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Florida, Fontenelle Forest, Nebraska, Bergen-Byron Swamp and Mianus River Gorge in New York and Wissahickon Valley, Pennsylvania.
- Landmark sites are deemed nationally significant based on their outstanding condition, illustrative character, rarity, diversity and value to science and education.
- Natural features at landmarks can include unspoiled wetlands and springs, undisturbed northern red oak forest, white cedar and mixed conifer swamps, prairie grasslands, unusual and highly decorated caves, volcanic necks and igneous intrusions, and evidence of past flora, fauna and ecosystems.
- National Natural Landmark designation does not require public access, carries no regulatory requirements or land-use restrictions. The National Park Service has no management authority over these sites and landowners retain all the rights of use to their property.
- The National Park Service works in partnership and alongside landmark owners and managers to recognize and support conservation of nationally significant sites that illustrate the rich and diverse tapestry of America's natural heritage.

