

HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

Origins of the Historic Preservation Fund

In 1966, the Special Committee on Historic Preservation of the U.S. Conference of Mayors addressed the need to establish a national historic preservation program. The result was the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) which authorized a State Historic Preservation Officer for each State and created the National Register of Historic Places, a mechanism for better Federal agency planning. The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) was established in 1977 as a matching grant program, currently authorized at \$150 million per year, and funded by Outer Continental Shelf oil lease revenues, not tax dollars. The idea being the exploitation of one resource should benefit another, even though the HPF has never been fully funded at its authorized level. Subsequent amendments to the Act in 1980 created the Certified Local Government Program and in 1992 established Tribal Historic Preservation Officers.

How Does The Historic Preservation Fund Work?

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior, and uses the majority of appropriated funds to provide matching grants to State and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO) to assist in their efforts to protect and preserve their historic resources. Each State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), appointed by the Governor for each state, manages this annual appropriation to perform the Federal preservation responsibilities required by the NHPA. Preservation activities may be carried out directly by States, or in the form of subgrants and contracts to public and private agencies, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and individuals. HPF grants to THPOs help them assume SHPO responsibilities on Indian land and undertake preservation activities.

Funding is used by States and Tribes to fund HPF eligible preservation projects including: survey and inventory, National Register nominations, preservation education, architectural planning, historic structure reports, community preservation plans, and bricks and mortar repair to buildings. The HPF allows each State the flexibility to shape a program according to its needs, as long as they are meeting the overall responsibilities outlined by the NHPA. Ten percent of each SHPO's allocation must be subgranted to Certified Local Governments, local governments certified by NPS and the State as having made a local commitment to historic preservation. These funds are spent locally on preservation projects, with selection decisions made at the State level. All HPF assisted projects must follow the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation*.