

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION LANDMARKS PROGRAM



THE PROGRAM

The National Park Service established the National Environmental Study Areas (NESA) program as a cooperative venture of the Service, the National Education Association, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Office of Education, and local educational communities. The program began by combining existing curricula of participating schools with environmental study areas located on lands administered by the Service. It is now available for use by schools everywhere in conjunction with other public and private lands. The Office of Education maintains a NESA catalog, information on which may be obtained by writing to that office, Washington, DC 20202.

The purpose of the National Environmental Education Landmarks (NEEL) program is to assist local and State governments, citizen organizations, and private individuals to:

1. Identify and preserve nationally significant environmental study areas where students and other interested persons can participate in quality environmental educational programs;
2. Encourage the articulation of an environmental ethic as the standard for personal and corporate conduct in the search for quality in daily life for an urban society.
3. Maintain a register of National Environmental Education Landmarks as a national inventory and a reference for groups and individuals interested in exemplary environmental education programs;
4. Provide technical assistance to groups and educational organizations interested in developing environmental education programs.

The areas involved in the NEEL program may be publicly or privately owned. They must possess natural or cultural resources of outstanding significance in illustrating the American environment as it is affected by and as it affects modern man. Some sites are primarily natural, and exemplify the elements, forces, and balances from which man himself is made, and from which his cities, society, and culture are made.

Other NEEL sites will have cultural significance. In such places a person can learn to recognize how the environment has affected man's development and how man, in turn, has affected his environment.

Combining the curriculum of the participating school with the resources of the site, the NEEL program offers an environmental learning experience that seeks to make imaginative use of both the cultural and natural worlds. For school children it helps to:

1. Introduce them to their total environment—cultural and natural, past and present—and help them realize that they are part of it.
2. Develop in them an understanding of the interdependency of man and his environment.
3. Equip them to be responsible and active members of the world they are shaping and that is shaping them.



Potential landmarks are selected from the NESAs catalog maintained by the Office of Education. Those selected are given professional review by a National Environmental Education Landmark Advisory Committee representing the National Park Service and the Office of Education. Those sites which meet the criteria are submitted to the Secretary of the Interior's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments. The Advisory Board submits its recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior, who has final responsibility for designation of the National Landmarks.

Upon Secretarial approval of a site the owner is invited to apply for a certificate and a bronze plaque designating the site as a registered National Environmental Education Landmark. Both the certificate and the plaque are provided without charge and are presented at an appropriate ceremony, if the owner desires.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF NEEL

National significance is ascribed to a site, previously listed in the NESAs catalog, exceptionally valuable for illustrating the interdependence and interrelationship of man and the total environment, and regularly used as part of a curriculum-related environmental education program of exceptional quality. National Environmental Education Landmarks must have the following characteristics:

1. Distinctive value in relating man to the environment of America.
2. Sufficient size and quality to achieve the educational

objective and accommodate the educational uses without impairment of the essential integrity of the resources. Since the program will involve urban areas to a large extent it is to be expected that Landmarks will range in size from a small plot to many acres.

3. Set aside and used regularly as part of curriculum-related education programs dealing with the total environment by public or private schools, as prescribed by the school board or other appropriate local or State authority responsible for approval of school curricula.

4. Environmental education is its primary purpose.

STANDARDS FOR CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE OF NEEL

INTEGRITY OF RESOURCE. Continuing integrity of site and program are essential elements in maintenance of National Landmark designation. The test is whether the area still possesses intact the environmental resources and on-site environmental education program for which it received recognition as being of national significance. Loss of integrity may range from destruction of the natural or cultural resource used in the environmental education program to the abandonment of the program itself.

Moreover, a Landmark may lose integrity if, even through no fault of the Landmark owner or administrator, circumstances and events on the lands adjacent to the Landmark destroy the environmental resources essential to the environmental education program or otherwise affect the accessibility or use of the site for environmental education. Thus, a highway project or drainage around a swamp could destroy the Landmark's ecology. Intense and uncontrolled development adjacent to a Landmark of cultural significance may so alter the setting that it no longer graphically illustrates how the natural features affected the architecture during a given time in history.

Reference to the original Landmark application and description is essential to evaluate continuing integrity.

ACCEPTABILITY OF USE. Many landmarks are in private ownership. Indeed, a primary purpose of the Landmark program is to encourage and assist local and State governments, private individuals and organizations in protecting and preserving representative examples of American environment and in using their land and cultural resources for environmental education.

Commercial use of the land, which may vary from private ownership to industrial complex, does not disqualify a site as long as the uses are compatible with the Landmark criteria and the educational objective of the program.

Since protection for educational uses is essential for Landmark designation, organized recreational programs, if any, within the designated Landmark area must be consistent with preservation of its value for environmental education programs. Although their value to school children is emphasized, National Environmental Education Landmarks will benefit persons of all ages as well as special interest groups.

RELATED PROGRAMS

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 directs the Secretary of the Interior to expand the National Register, authorized by the Historic Sites Act of 1935, to include places of State, regional, and local significance as well as those nationally significant places qualified for designation as National Historic Landmarks.

This act provides certain safeguards against damage by Federal undertakings for all properties included in the National Register and a grant-in-aid program to assist in their preservation. It also authorizes the establishment of an Advisory Council on Historic Preservation composed of Federal department heads, the Chairman of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and citizens appointed by the President.

While the National Register includes places of national, State, regional, and local significance, Landmark designation is the unique status accorded limited numbers of properties meeting the stringent criteria of national significance. All properties eligible for National Historic Landmark status, whether the owner applies for the formal designation or not, are entered in the National Register as soon as the Secretary of the Interior finds them of national significance.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY. This program for recording important examples of American architecture is conducted in cooperation with the American Institute of Architects and the Library of Congress. The records—photographs, measured drawings, written data—are deposited in the Library of Congress, where they are available for inspection and study.

Recording by HABS is evidence that a building is worthy of preservation. Most recorded buildings will be entered in the National Register either as National Historic Landmarks or by nomination of the States.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ARCHEOLOGICAL PROGRAM. Archeological research and protection are other major responsibilities of the National Park Service. Prehistoric ruins were among the earliest areas set aside for Department of the Interior protection. The Antiquities Act of 1906 provided the Department with initial protective and research powers in respect to archeological resources. The Act of 1916 creating the National Park Service charged that agency with protection of historic resources in the National Park System. The Historic Sites Act of 1935, the Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960, and the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 greatly broadened these responsibilities.

The Service now conducts a program of salvage archeology where highway construction, dams, pipelines, and other projects threaten sites rich in prehistoric or historic data. A large proportion of the archeological fieldwork in this country is conducted under the Inter-Agency Archeological Salvage Program, sponsored by the Service.

THE NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS PROGRAM. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to make a survey of historic sites and buildings to identify those of national significance. Potential landmarks are evaluated by the Advisory Board on National

Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, and are recommended to the Secretary of the Interior.

Sites and structures found nationally significant by the Secretary are eligible for designation as National Historic Landmarks. Upon the owner's agreement to adhere to accepted preservation precepts, this designation is recognized by the award of a bronze plaque and a certificate. The program began in 1960.

Properties eligible for landmark designation are listed in a booklet entitled *National Parks and Landmarks*. Studies leading to the selection of National Historic Landmarks are published in a series of books. The booklet and the books are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. (Write to that office for pricelists.)

THE NATURAL LANDMARKS PROGRAM. The first areas in the Register of Natural Areas were designated in 1964. This program is similar to that of the National Historic Landmarks. Natural areas considered of national significance are cited by the Secretary of the Interior as eligible for recognition as Registered Natural Landmarks, regardless of ownership. At the Secretary's invitation, the owner may apply for a certificate and a bronze plaque designating the site.

OTHER PROGRAMS. Among the newer programs of the National Park Service is a plan to identify and recognize significant engineering landmarks. The Service works closely with the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Library of Congress in establishing a graphic, documentary record of the Nation's distinctive engineering accomplishments.

Other related programs, not sponsored by the National Park Service, are: The Architectural Records Project, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., which is assembling basic data on documentation of American architectural history, and is compiling a master catalog of American architectural drawings. The Index of American Design in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., maintains an extensive survey, made during the 1930's of historic American interior designs and furnishings.

RELATED PRESERVATION FOLDERS

The National Park Service publishes the following information folders similar to this one on its preservation programs: *National Park Service Archeological Program*, *The National Register of Historic Places*, *The Historic American Buildings Survey*, *The Natural Landmarks Program*, and *The National Historic Landmarks Program*. These five publications are available in packet form (*National Park Service Preservation Programs*, 50 cents) from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

For further information about any of the programs mentioned in this folder, write to the Director, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

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