

National Park Service
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Northeast Region
Philadelphia Office



Stonewall Reconnaissance Survey

New York, NY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A reconnaissance survey of Stonewall, located on the lower west side of Manhattan in New York City, was conducted by the National Park Service (NPS) at the request of Representative Jerrold Nadler (NY-10) and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. Representative Nadler and Senator Gillibrand requested that the properties encompassed by and surrounding the Stonewall National Historic Landmark be evaluated for the likelihood that its resources would meet the criteria for new national parklands.

The Stonewall uprising occurred between June 28 and July 3, 1969 over a several block area in the Greenwich Village section of New York City. Stonewall is regarded by many as the single most important event that led to the modern movement for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) civil rights. The area where Stonewall occurred is now designated as a national historic landmark (NHL), significant for its association with events that outstandingly represent the struggle for civil rights in America.

This survey evaluated the likelihood that the resources within the Stonewall NHL boundary would meet the four criteria for new parklands: national significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management. The conclusions of this survey indicate that the resources associated with Stonewall would likely meet all four criteria, and that further study is warranted through a special resource study. A special resource study must be authorized by Congress.

National Significance: A special resource study is likely to find that the resources within the survey area are nationally significant. Stonewall was previously designated as an NHL and, therefore, has already been determined by the Secretary of the Interior to be nationally significant.

Suitability: A special resource study is likely to find that the resources within the survey area are suitable for inclusion in the national park system. While there are a number of sites throughout the country associated with the LGBT rights movement, the majority of those sites are privately owned, not open to the public, or offer no interpretive or educational programming. Those which do offer some level of interpretive and educational opportunities are focused primarily on one individual or single event and do not tell the story of the larger national LGBT rights movement. The survey team believes that Stonewall offers the unique opportunity to interpret a national LGBT story which is not otherwise represented within the national park system or by others.

Feasibility: A special resource study is likely to find that the Stonewall survey area would be a feasible addition to the national park system. This determination is based on the assumption that a new park unit for Stonewall would likely become part of the Manhattan sites sub-cluster of the National Parks of New York Harbor, reducing some of the costs that normally accompany the es-

establishment of a new stand-alone park. This survey also puts a high value on maintaining existing working relationships with landowners and developing new partnerships to keep costs low and build upon the resources and knowledge of other entities.

Need for NPS Management: A special resource study is likely to find that the fourth criterion for new parklands, the need for direct NPS Management, would be met. While the City of New York, the principal landowner in the survey area, provides a high level of resource protection for the Stonewall area, the NPS has the potential to reinforce that protection and bring national attention to Stonewall and place stories of the LGBT civil rights movement on a national platform. A collaborative relationship with shared operational goals between the NPS and the city would likely result in a more effective management system for the protection and interpretation of this site.

PART 1

INTRODUCTION & STUDY PROCESS

Background

On August 28, 2015, the Director of the National Park Service (NPS) received a request from Representative Jerrold Nadler and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand to undertake a survey of the resources associated with Stonewall, located on the lower west side of Manhattan in New York City (see Figure 1). By approval of the Director, the Northeast Regional Office of the NPS was tasked with undertaking a reconnaissance survey to evaluate, on a preliminary basis, Stonewall as a potential unit of the national park system and determine if further study through a congressionally-authorized special resource study is warranted.

A reconnaissance survey team was established by the region and team members conducted a site visit to evaluate the resources within the boundary of the Stonewall National Historic Landmark on September 22, 2015. The reconnaissance team consisted of staff members from planning; visitor experience, interpretation, and education; historic architecture; and facilities management programs from the NPS's Northeast Regional Office; and staff members from the National Parks of New York Harbor.

Study Objectives and Scope

Areas comprising the present 409 unit national park system are cumulative expressions of a larger national heritage. Potential additions to the system should therefore contribute in their own special way to a system that fully represents the broad spectrum of natural and cultural resources that characterize our nation. The NPS is responsible for conducting professional studies of potential additions to the national park system when specifically authorized by an Act of Congress, and for making recommendations regarding new areas to the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and Congress.

A reconnaissance survey determines whether a resource is likely or unlikely to meet established criteria for the designation of potential units of the national park system and to recommend whether further study through a congressionally authorized special resource study should be considered. These criteria include determinations of national significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management. Should a resource be deemed not likely to meet any of the criteria, the NPS does not normally recommend that a special resource study be authorized.

Evaluation Criteria

Several laws and NPS policy outline the criteria for establishing the eligibility of potential units of the national park system. To receive a favorable recommendation from the NPS, a proposed addition to the national park system must (1) possess *nationally significant* natural or cultural resources; (2) be a *suitable* addition to the system; (3) be a *feasible* addition to the system; and (4) require *direct NPS management* instead of alternative protection by other public agencies or the private sector. These criteria are designed to ensure that the national park system includes only the most outstanding examples of the nation's natural and cultural resources. They also recognize that there are other alternatives, short of designation as a unit of the national park system, for preserving the nation's resources.

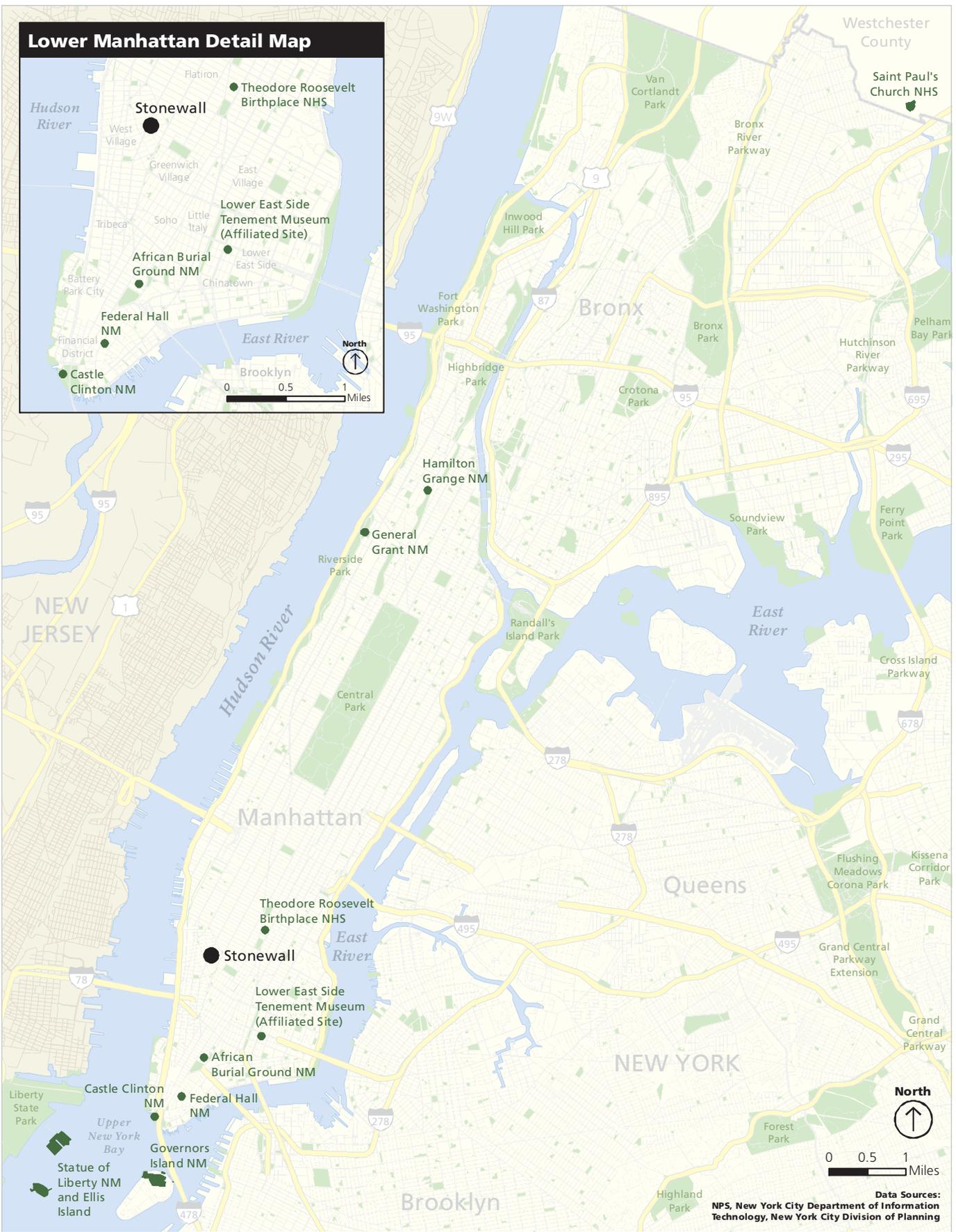
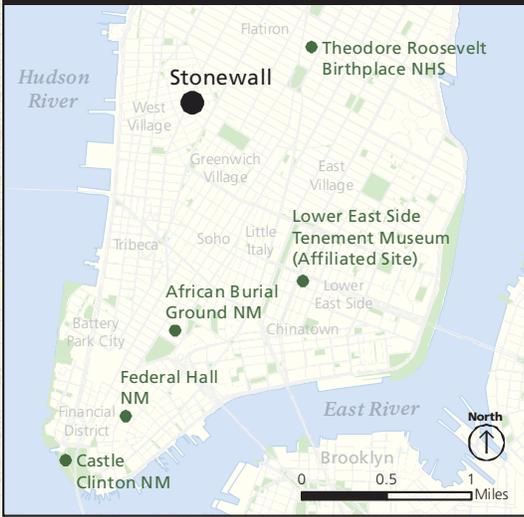
An area or resource may be considered *nationally significant* if it is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource; possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our nation's heritage; offers superlative opportunities for public enjoyment or for scientific study; and retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of a resource. If a reconnaissance survey concludes that a resource is not likely to meet the national significance criterion, the other criteria below are not normally addressed in the survey.

An area may be considered *suitable* for potential addition to the national park system if it represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the system or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies; tribal, state, or local governments; or the private sector.

To be *feasible* as a new unit of the national park system, an area must be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment (taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond its boundaries), and be capable of efficient administration by the NPS at a reasonable cost.

There are many excellent examples of the successful management of important natural and cultural resources by other public agencies, private conservation organizations, and individuals. The NPS applauds these accomplishments, and actively encourages the expansion of conservation activities by state, local, and private entities, and by other federal agencies. Unless *direct NPS management* of a studied area is identified as the clearly superior alternative, the NPS will recommend that one or more of these other entities assume a lead management role, and that the area would not likely be recommended as a potential unit of the national park system.

Lower Manhattan Detail Map



Data Sources:
NPS, New York City Department of Information
Technology, New York City Division of Planning



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Stonewall Reconnaissance Survey

Figure 1
Stonewall Location

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PART 2

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION & HISTORIC CONTEXT OF THE SURVEY AREA

Location, Boundaries, Land Use, & Current Ownership

The Stonewall uprising occurred in a small neighborhood area surrounding the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village area of Manhattan. The boundary of the survey area is defined by the Stonewall NHL nomination as the Stonewall Inn (51-53 Christopher Street), Christopher Park, and portions of Christopher Street, Grove Street, Waverly Place, Gay Street, Greenwich Avenue, Sixth Avenue and West 10th Street, including their sidewalks (see Figure 2).

The majority of the resources within the survey area are public open spaces or streets owned and maintained by the City of New York. Christopher Park, a 0.12-acre triangular open space, is also owned by the city as part of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. Maintenance of the park is a collaborative effort between the city and its partners. The city is responsible for maintaining the fences, benches and hardscape features of the park as well as trash collection and litter removal which occurs on a daily basis. The city maintains a partnership with the Christopher Park Alliance to maintain the park's landscaping with support from the Parks Department. The park is open to the public during the daytime on a year-round basis and locked at night to protect the resources within its boundaries.

The structures located at 51-53 Christopher Street are the only buildings located within the NHL boundary. These two adjoining buildings, collectively referred to as the Stonewall Inn, are under private ownership. The ground floors are currently leased as separate retail space for a bar and a nail salon. Both are open to patrons on a daily basis.

The entirety of the Stonewall NHL boundary also falls within the city's Greenwich Village Historic District and is protected by the city's Landmarks Law. The Greenwich Village Historic District was designated before the events of Stonewall took place and its significance is focused on the historic character of the district rather than the connection to the LGBT rights movement. The Stonewall Inn was subsequently designated an individual city landmark for its association with LGBT civil rights. The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission reviews all proposals for structural modifications or additions to all locations which are listed as individual landmarks or fall within a historic district.

Description of the Resources

The following resource description focuses on the two most significant resources found within the NHL boundary: the historic Stonewall Inn and Christopher Park, which are also the focus for the preliminary evaluation of parkland criteria in Part 3. This section is based on information

found in the Stonewall NHL nomination, the New York City Landmark Designation, and from information gathered during the survey team's site visit.

The structures known as the Stonewall Inn were constructed in 1843 (51 Christopher Street) and 1846 (53 Christopher Street) as two separate stable buildings. In 1914, 53 Christopher Street was rehabilitated for use as a bakery on the first floor and apartment space on the second floor. Then, in 1930, 51 Christopher Street was rehabilitated in the same manner and the first floor was connected to 53 Christopher Street to create one large commercial space. The structures were also given a unifying façade consisting of a brick-clad ground level and stucco second level. In 1934, the ground level of the structures was leased for use as a restaurant and bar called Bonnie's Stonewall Inn which stayed in business for over 30 years. In 1966, the restaurant changed hands and, following some modifications to the buildings, re-opened as an LGBT bar in 1967 as the Stonewall Inn.



The Stonewall Inn

The newly established LGBT bar was modified to create privacy and security for the patrons. These modifications included painting the windows black, lining the inside of the windows with plywood, and installing steel doors inside the exterior doors to hamper police raids. During its period of significance, the Stonewall Inn retained the joint interior layout and spanned the entire ground level of 51 and 53 Christopher Street.

Following the Stonewall uprising in 1969, the bar would close and go through a series of minor modifications as ownership and commercial use leases would change. The most recognizable changes include removal of the vertical Stonewall Inn neon sign (installed in 1934 and removed in 1989) and the separation of the first floor interior into two individual commercial spaces in the early 1970s.

The brick and stucco façade remains intact today. The ground level consists of three separate arched entranceways as it did in 1969: a central double-door entry (which was the main entry to the 1969 Stonewall Inn) and two, smaller entryways on the east and west ends of the buildings. Two large, rectangular windows separate the doors. The doors and the glass in the bar's windows are replacements as the original doors and glass were destroyed during the Stonewall uprising. According to the NHL nomination, the exterior façade and interior configuration of the Stonewall Inn still retains substantive integrity to its period of significance.

Immediately across from the Stonewall Inn is Christopher Park which is bound by Christopher Street, West 4th Street, and Grove Street. Brick sidewalks line the city streets and include street lighting and street tree planting beds. The park is surrounded by a historic wrought-iron fence which has gated openings to the park on all three sides including a large arched entryway with educational signs about the Stonewall uprising on the western end (along West 4th Street). The gates are open during the daytime and locked at night.



Figure 2
Stonewall NHL Boundary

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The park itself is divided into two halves. The western half is lined with brick pavers and is open to the public on a daily basis. This public area of the park contains landscaping, benches, and George Segal's sculpture, "Gay Liberation," which commemorates the 1969 Stonewall uprising. The eastern half of the park is fenced off from public entry and contains a well-maintained garden with plantings of trees, shrubs, and perennials; a statue of the Civil War general Philip Sheridan; and a memorial flagstaff and plaque dedicated to Col. Ephraim Elmer Ellsworth, an officer with the New York Fire Zouaves during the Civil War. With the exception of a few missing street trees, cracked brick pavers, and slightly deteriorated sections of the fence, the park is in good condition and retains its 1969 configuration.



Christopher Park Entrance

History of Stonewall

The 1960s are considered by most to be the starting point for the modern LGBT civil rights movement. Prior to 1960, homosexuality was illegal in most states and people were frequently arrested for acts such as same-sex dancing, kissing, or wearing clothing of the opposite gender. Across the country, bars were frequently raided by police when it was suspected that drinks were being sold to homosexuals. Members of the LGBT community lived their lives in secrecy for fear of losing their jobs or being arrested.

By the late 1960s, the Stonewall Inn, though mob-controlled, had become one of the most popular LGBT bars in New York City. Christopher Park, located across the street from the Stonewall Inn, was also a popular place for younger gay men, most of whom were homeless, to congregate and socialize. Like many LGBT bars in New York City, the Stonewall Inn was frequently raided by the police for illegally selling drinks to homosexuals in violation of applicable laws. At approximately 1:15 a.m. on Saturday, June 28, 1969, undercover police officers raided the Stonewall Inn after the officers had witnessed the illegal sale of alcohol.

The police officers began to detain patrons who had no identification and those who were dressed in drag. The remaining patrons were told to leave the bar and began to gather outside of the Stonewall Inn along with the younger men who were already gathered in Christopher Park. Pay phones just outside the bar, and the bar's proximity to two subway stations and two of Manhattan's major north-south thoroughfares allowed word about the raid to spread rapidly throughout the city. As news spread, the crowds began to grow. As the police paddy wagons arrived to remove the patrons that had been arrested, the crowd became agitated and began to yell and throw pennies, beer bottles, street pavers, and bricks at the officers. This led to additional conflicts between the officers and members of the crowd.

As the crowd grew angrier, the police officers retreated into the Stonewall Inn and locked themselves inside. The violence escalated as the crowd began to break windows and use an uprooted parking meter to break down the doors of the Stonewall Inn. From there, a small fire erupted inside the bar and at 3:00 a.m., fire trucks and riot police moved onto the scene and dispersed the crowd. In all, thirteen people were arrested as a result of the raid and the Stonewall Inn itself was looted; doors, windows, mirrors and other fixtures were broken or destroyed. The initial Stonewall riot only lasted a couple of hours, but sparked a series of nightly protests in Christopher Park and the surrounding neighborhood streets over the course of the following week. Each time, the riot police were called to the scene to disperse the crowds.

The events of Stonewall had an immediate impact on the LGBT community and activist groups in New York and drew large numbers of people to the LGBT rights movement. The New York LGBT community began to outwardly display signs of their sexual orientation in public, something they previously kept hidden from fear of arrest. LGBT activist groups dispersed flyers and newsletters and media coverage of the events helped to spread the movement nationwide. Within days of the Stonewall uprising, protests were being held in cities across the country to show support and fight for LGBT rights.

The Stonewall uprising that occurred between June 28, 1969 and July 3, 1969, is frequently cited as the event that kicked off the modern LGBT civil rights movement. LGBT rights groups had formed in years past calling for an end to discrimination, but none led to the same level of impact. Stonewall “became the major catalyst for change in the self-awareness of gay men and lesbians, for the development of a gay rights movement, and for the beginning of a change in the perception of gay men and lesbians by the heterosexual world” (NHL Nomination, 1999).

New LGBT organizations would be established immediately following the Stonewall uprising which would become more publicly and politically active than earlier organizations. An increase in cultural activity related to LGBT rights also increased following the uprising including openly LGBT themed art work, poetry, literature, theater, and motion pictures. Stonewall, and the events which followed, provided a feeling of empowerment to the LGBT community and others who have continued to fight for civil rights issues. Today, Christopher Park and the Stonewall NHL are frequently used as a site of remembrance and a place of congregation as the LGBT movement continues to move forward.

PART 3

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF NEW NATIONAL PARKLAND CRITERIA

To be found potentially eligible for inclusion in the national park system, a proposed addition must (1) possess nationally significant natural or cultural resources; (2) be a suitable addition to the system; (3) be a feasible addition to the system; and (4) require direct NPS management, instead of alternative protection by other public agencies or the private sector.

Preliminary Evaluation of Significance

National Park Service *Management Policies 2006* provide that a resource will be considered nationally significant if it meets all of the following criteria:

1. is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource;
2. possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our nation's heritage;
3. offers superlative opportunities for public enjoyment, or for scientific study; and
4. retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of a resource.

Cultural resources being considered for possible inclusion in the national park system must satisfy the national historic landmark criteria contained in 36 CFR Part 65. According to those criteria, national significance is ascribed to districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess:

1. exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture; and
2. a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

In addition, nationally significant sites must meet at least one of the following:

- Criterion 1: Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of United States history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained.
- Criterion 2: Properties that are associated importantly with the lives of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States.
- Criterion 3: Properties that represent some great idea or ideal of the American people.
- Criterion 4: Properties that embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style or method of con-

struction, or that represent a significant, distinctive and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

- Criterion 5: Properties that are composed of integral parts of the environment not sufficiently significant by reason of historical association or artistic merit to warrant individual recognition but collectively compose an entity of exceptional historical or artistic significance, or outstandingly commemorate or illustrate a way of life or culture.
- Criterion 6: Properties that have yielded or may be likely to yield information of major scientific importance by revealing new cultures, or by shedding light upon periods of occupation over large areas of the United States. Such sites are those which have yielded, or which may reasonably be expected to yield, data affecting theories, concepts, and ideas to a major degree.

As described in part 2, the national significance of Stonewall was recognized through designation as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) by the Secretary of the Interior on February 16, 2000. According to the NHL nomination,

Stonewall is nationally significant under NHL Criterion 1 because it is associated with events that outstandingly represent the struggle for gay civil rights in America. . . Stonewall is regarded by many as the single most important event that led to the modern gay and lesbian liberation movement and to the struggle for civil rights for gay and lesbian Americans.

When evaluating national significance, resources that have already been designated as NHLs are considered to already have been determined to be nationally significant and require no further analysis; therefore, the resources associated with Stonewall would likely meet the national significance criterion for cultural resources for the reasons identified in its nomination.

Preliminary Evaluation of Suitability

NPS *Management Policies 2006* provide that an area is considered suitable for potential addition to the national park system if it represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the system, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies; tribal, state, or local governments; or the private sector. It is important to reiterate that the suitability analysis is not limited to whether resources are represented in the system, but extends the analysis to similar resources protected by other public entities and the private sector.

A reconnaissance study does not investigate resources for suitability to the degree or level of detail that would be undertaken in a special resource study. Rather, it attempts to identify already protected resources that readily suggest the likelihood of confirming or refuting a finding of suitability should a special resource study be undertaken.

In evaluating the suitability of cultural resources within or outside the national park system, the NPS uses its “Thematic Framework” for history and prehistory. The framework is an outline of major themes and concepts that help to conceptualize American history. It is used to assist in the identification of cultural resources that embody America’s past and to describe and analyze the multiple layers of history encapsulated within each resource.

Through eight concepts that encompass the multi-faceted and interrelated nature of human experience, the thematic framework reflects an interdisciplinary, less compartmentalized approach to American history. The concepts are:

1. Peopling Places
2. Creating Social Institutions
3. Expressing Cultural Values
4. Shaping the Political Landscape
5. Developing the American Economy
6. Expanding Science and Technology
7. Transforming the Environment
8. Changing Role of the United States in the World Community

The thematic concept applicable to Stonewall is *Creating Social Institutions*. This theme focuses upon the diverse formal and informal structures such as schools or voluntary associations through which people express values and live their lives. Americans generate temporary movements and create enduring institutions in order to define, sustain, or reform these values. Why people organize to transform their institutions is as important to understand as how they choose to do so. Thus, both the diverse motivations people act on and the strategies they employ are critical concerns of social history. Topics that help define this theme include clubs and organizations, reform movements, religious institutions, and recreational activities. For the purpose of this analysis, the topic of reform movements was selected to guide the discussion of sites associated with LGBT Americans.

For the purposes of this survey, this suitability analysis focuses primarily only on sites which have previously been designated as NHLs or listed on the National Register of Historic Places for their association with LGBT history as their significance has already been documented. In addition, two units of the national park system were selected for comparison. Both sites provide some level of interpretive programming related to LGBT history: Governor's Island National Monument and President's Park. The final site chosen for this analysis is a congressionally designated national memorial. Additional sites which also represent this theme could be evaluated in more detail through a special resource study if requested by Congress. Following is a brief description of the selected sites for analysis:

[Governors Island National Monument \(New York, NY\)](#) – Henry Gerber, one of America's earliest LGBT rights activists, was stationed on Governors Island at a U.S. Army installation from 1925 to 1942. While serving at Governors Island, Gerber was subject to beatings, blackmail, and other forms of harassment because of his homosexuality. Despite this, he continued his Army career until he was honorably discharged in 1942. Through his writings, he shared his story in the following decades, inspiring the movement that would eventually lead to the 1969 Stonewall uprising in New York City. The park currently interprets Henry Gerber's story through the park's website.

[President's Park \(Washington, DC\)](#) – The Butt-Millet Memorial Fountain located just south of the White House in President's Park memorializes Archibald Butt and Francis Millet who lost their lives aboard the RMS *Titanic* in 1912. Butt and Millet were close friends and housemates who fre-

quently attended social gatherings and parties together. Although it was speculated that the two were involved in a romantic relationship, this relationship was never confirmed. The park interprets the story of Butt and Millet through the park's website.

[Henry Gerber House \(Chicago, IL\)](#) – This was home of pioneering LGBT rights activist Henry Gerber who led the formation of the Society for Human Rights in 1924, credited as the first LGBT rights organization in the United States. In this home is where Henry Gerber is thought to have written the Society's correspondence and newsletters. The house was designated a national historic landmark in 2015. It is used as a private residence today.

[Cherry Grove Community House and Theatre \(Fire Island, NY\)](#) – The Cherry Grove community, located on Fire Island, NY, was a popular destination for LGBT vacationers in the mid-1900s. The town was the frequent subject of police raids during the 1950s. Opened in 1948, Cherry Grove Community House and Theatre is the longest continuously operating LGBT theater in the United States. The Community House and Theatre is significant for the role it played in shaping what gradually evolved into "America's First Gay and Lesbian Town." The Community House still hosts theater productions, exhibits, and other events throughout the year.

Related to the Cherry Grove Community House and Theatre is the [Carrington House](#) located within Fire Island National Seashore. Listed on the National Register, the Carrington House is significant as a link to the development of Fire Island (especially Fire Island Pines and Cherry Grove) as a LGBT friendly community. The home was the property of Broadway producer Frank Carrington who hosted a number of stage, screen, and literary celebrities in his home and helped to establish the arts community in Cherry Grove. It is now owned and managed by the NPS, which is collaborating with local historic preservation and conservation interests to rehabilitate the house for future administrative use.

[Dr. Franklin E. Kameny Residence \(Washington, DC\)](#) – Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Dr. Kameny's home served as headquarters for Washington, D.C.'s first LGBT rights organization, the Mattachine Society of Washington, D.C. Dr. Kameny led a newly militant activism in the fledgling LGBT civil rights of the 1960s. He was a landmark figure in articulating and achieving LGBT civil rights in federal employment and security clearance cases, and in reversing the medical community's view on homosexuality as a mental disorder. Kameny's efforts in the civil rights movement, modeled in part on African-American civil rights strategies and tactics, significantly altered the rights, perceptions, and role of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people in American society. The house is currently used as a private residence.

[James Merrill House \(Stonington, CT\)](#) – The James Merrill House, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is significant for its association with James Ingram Merrill (1926-1995) who was an acclaimed poet, garnering nearly every major award in his field, including the Pulitzer Prize, two National Book Awards, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and the Medal of Honor for Literature from the National Arts Club. Merrill produced virtually all of his major writing during his residence in the third floor apartment of this house where he lived with his partner. Today the house is leased out for retail space on the first floor, residential space on the second floor, and for an artist-in-residence space on the third floor (where James Merrill lived). The third floor apartment is open to the public for tours year round.

[National AIDS Memorial Grove \(San Francisco, CA\)](#) – The National AIDS Memorial Grove was designated a National Memorial by Congress in 1996. The Memorial is located within Golden Gate

Park, a unit of the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department. The Memorial is a living tribute to all those who have been affected by AIDS. It is a place of remembrance, healing, and hope.

In summary, the national park system contains two units that provide LGBT interpretive programming, but the programming is limited and only available through articles on the park's websites, is not the main focus of either park, and is unrelated to the purpose for which those parks were established. Additionally, the interpretive stories focus on specific individuals and their experiences. The parks do not interpret the national LGBT civil rights movement or its impacts on the larger society, which Stonewall has the potential to offer. While the remaining sites listed above are on the National Register or designated as NHLs because of their association with important LGBT activists or events, many are privately owned and do not offer interpretive or educational programming. Those that are open to the public and offer some level of programming are, like the NPS units, focused on one individual and do not interpret the LGBT civil rights movement through a larger, national lens.

Conclusion: Likelihood of Meeting Suitability Criteria

This reconnaissance survey found other resources already protected by units of the national park system and others which represent the theme of *Creating Social Institutions* and the topic of LGBT civil rights movements. These sites, however, focus on specific elements or individuals within the larger LGBT civil rights movement and do not represent the overall national story. The events leading up to Stonewall, and those that occurred as a result of Stonewall, provide educational opportunities which are not already being provided by the national park system or by other entities. The national historic landmark district has maintained its integrity, and the quality and character of its resources would likely contribute to the interpretive and educational potential of a possible new unit. The survey area will likely expand opportunities for visitor use and resource protection in the national park system.

For this reason, the study team concludes that Stonewall would likely be found to be a suitable addition to the national park system.

Preliminary Evaluation of Feasibility

NPS *Management Policies 2006* states that in order to be feasible as a new unit of the national park system, an area must be:

1. of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment (taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond proposed park boundaries), and
9. capable of efficient administration by the NPS at a reasonable cost.

In evaluating feasibility, the NPS considers a variety of factors, including: size; boundary configurations; current and potential uses of the study area and surrounding lands; land ownership patterns; public enjoyment potential; costs associated with acquisition, development, restoration, and operation; access; current and potential threats to the resources; existing degradation of resources; staffing requirements; local planning and zoning for the study area; the level of local and general public support; and the economic/socioeconomic impacts of designation as a unit of the national park system. The feasibility evaluation also considers the ability of the NPS to undertake

new management responsibilities in light of current and projected constraints on funding and personnel.

Boundary Configuration, Land Ownership, & Community Support

The focus of this reconnaissance survey, as specified by the congressional request, is defined as the area encompassed by, and surrounding, the Stonewall National Historic Landmark boundary. Legislation establishing a new park would determine the park's authorized boundary, but for the purposes of this survey, the NHL boundary will be used to focus the feasibility analysis. The NHL district is of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment.

Publicly owned streets and sidewalks make up the majority of the Stonewall NHL boundary along with the city-owned Christopher Park and the privately-owned Stonewall Inn. Typically, the NPS acquires properties by donation from a willing landowner within its authorized boundary. During the survey team's evaluation of the resources within the NHL boundary, Christopher Park stood out as the likely candidate for NPS ownership. The current landowner of Christopher Park, the City of New York, has been supportive of both the survey effort and concept of NPS involvement, and is open to the idea of NPS ownership of the property. The remainder of the NHL boundary, including the Stonewall Inn, would likely remain under current ownership.

Public outreach efforts were beyond the scope of this survey and a broader national sense of support for designating Stonewall as a unit of the national park system was not determined. During the course of this survey, however, the National Parks Conservation Association has reached out to a number of interested Congressional members, private organizations, and State and City assembly and council members who have all shown support for the designation. Other outreach efforts conducted by the National Parks Conservation Association show that the local community and support groups are generally supportive of the national and international recognition that the creation of a park would mean for the site, but are interested in knowing the operational details that a new unit of the national park system would bring.

Current & Potential Threats to the Resources

One of the largest threats to historic structural resources is loss of significant values and associations. This is often due to inappropriate alterations or lack of maintenance. The Stonewall NHL boundary lies within the larger Greenwich Village Historic District. However, it should be noted that the Greenwich Village Historic District was established prior to the events of Stonewall, so that the underlying basis of the District does not relate to the area's role in the history of the LGBT rights movement. In addition, the Stonewall Inn is listed as a New York City Landmark as a direct result of its connection to the events of 1969. New York City historic districts and landmarks are protected under the city's Landmarks Law and are overseen by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). The LPC is responsible for reviewing and approving all alterations to buildings within a historic district or individually designated as city landmarks. This level of historic preservation regulation greatly reduces the potential for deterioration or inappropriate development within the Stonewall NHL boundary.

A potential tool for additional resource protection, especially in regard to protection of the

Stonewall Inn, is the purchase or donation of a façade easement from the current owner to either the NPS or other historic preservation entity. The interior of the Stonewall Inn has been altered since the 1969 uprising, but the exterior façade retains much of its appearance at that time. If the NPS were to be involved, an easement would allow the agency to provide some type of funding, likely in the form of preservation technical assistance, to the landowner for future restoration work. This reconnaissance survey process did not include contacting the Stonewall Inn landowner to determine his or her interest or willingness in donating or selling a façade easement to the NPS or other entity.

Access

Access to the Stonewall NHL district is readily available by means of public transportation. Both subway and bus stops are adjacent to the historic district and operate daily. Public parking garages are also located within a few blocks of the survey area, but bus parking is very limited in Manhattan and could pose access limitations for large tour groups. Tour buses currently have a loop for Lower Manhattan which includes a stop in Greenwich Village. Additional tour bus possibilities directly to the site, although not a necessary component for access, would need to be determined in collaboration with the New York City Department of Transportation; or alternatively, visitation to the site by means of public transportation only could be encouraged.

The majority of the Stonewall NHL district is comprised of public streets, sidewalks, and Christopher Park which allows easy access for visitors to walk through on their own time. The Stonewall Inn is privately owned and contains retail space on the first floor including a bar and nail salon. These retail spaces would remain under private ownership and open to patrons during regular business hours.

Potential Visitor Experience & Interpretive Staffing Requirements

Providing opportunities for public enjoyment is an important part of the NPS mission. Public enjoyment means providing opportunities that are appropriate to the purpose for which the park was established, and that can be sustained without causing unacceptable impacts. For cultural resources, these opportunities are frequently educational and interpretive experiences in historic spaces. Sites within the national park system provide these experiences differently depending on the size and type of resource.

A reconnaissance survey does not include the full development and analysis of alternative management options; however, the survey team has identified some potential NPS models that may be worthy of consideration and would likely be feasible for the NPS to administer. It is assumed under all models that if Stonewall were designated as a unit of the national park system, it would be placed under the administration of the National Parks of New York Harbor and become part of the Manhattan sites cluster of parks. Stonewall, like the seven existing national parks which comprise the Manhattan sites cluster, would fall under the management of a single superintendent and share staffing and administrative space. It is also assumed under all models that strong partnerships would be a large component of maintaining and operating the site. New partnerships would be created and existing partnerships, such as the city's current partnership with the Christopher Park Alliance to maintain Christopher Park, would continue.

Model 1: Community Partnership

The NPS recognizes the strong community involvement which already exists within and surrounding the Stonewall NHL district. Under the Community Partnership model, the NPS would build upon the work already being done by others by partnering with nearby LGBT advocacy groups (the LGBT Community Center or Heritage of Pride, for example) for visitor experiences and services. Partners would provide limited visitor services using their existing storefront space as well as provide limited interpretation services and coordination of special events alongside the NPS. Alternatively, if partner space is limited, the NPS could rent storefront space in the vicinity of Christopher Park for visitor services, but there would be no NPS-owned visitor contact station under this model. Other options for telling the stories of Stonewall and LGBT story include the use of artist and/or art exhibits as well as adding additional partners.

The NPS would support a strong volunteer and youth engagement program in partnership with existing community organizations and would also utilize art to tell LGBT stories. NPS presence at the site would be limited under this alternative, using existing staff from the Manhattan national park sites for special events and scheduled interpretive or educational programs. NPS staff would provide partnership training, offer technical expertise where needed, and develop interpretive and educational waysides for the park. In addition to existing NPS staff, successful establishment of these programs would likely require the addition of a full-time exhibit/media specialist for the first few years.

Model 2: Newsstand “Visitor Center”

Under this model, the NPS would have a stronger physical presence at the site as compared to the other models, but would only be staffed seasonally during weekends and for special events. The NPS might develop a small visitor contact station in the form of a newsstand or other kiosk-style structure just outside of the NHL boundary in order to provide limited visitor services. The NPS could establish partnerships with existing LGBT advocacy groups or work with vendors, such as Eastern National, to partially staff the visitor contact station, thereby extending the hours of operation.

Although not the main focus of this model, the NPS would look to create partnerships with other groups who already provide tours of the Stonewall area to provide additional interpretation services. Audio stations could be used to deliver interpretive content under this model. The NPS would develop interpretive waysides which could potentially include digital information boards if digital newsstands were used for the visitor contact station. This model would require the addition of a part-time employee to periodically staff the contact station and provide limited partnership training and technical expertise.

Model 3: Virtual Visitor Center

The Virtual Visitor Center model would provide the majority of visitor information (history of Stonewall, tour routes, directions to the park, etc.) through websites and other digital media. Visitors could learn about the history of the site before coming to the park or use their own devices on-site; for example, smartphone apps and short YouTube videos could be used as a virtual guide while at the park and to connect the story to other places. Podcasts could be developed to offer tours of the park at the visitor’s convenience. The NPS would develop interpretive wayside panels under this model as with the previous models to interpret the cultural landscape and provide

information to those without digital access or those who prefer a more traditional source for information.

The NPS would not staff the site under this model with the exception of some special events. The NPS may develop limited partnerships with existing LGBT advocacy groups to distribute information, such as park brochures, but no staffed interpretive programming would be developed. Establishing and maintaining the Virtual Visitor Center model could become a costly expenditure for the NPS, and partnerships may become crucial in order to sustain this model over the long-term. At a minimum, it is expected that this model would require the addition of one permanent, full-time employee specifically to develop and maintain the digital components of this model.

Costs

To evaluate financial feasibility, analyses of comparable costs of existing units of the national park system of similar size are often used in reconnaissance surveys. Should a new unit be designated for the Stonewall site, it would likely be administered by the National Parks of New York Harbor and therefore use existing administrative facilities and staff. Costs would likely be much lower than those of a new stand-alone park. It would not be anticipated that the NPS would acquire structural resources, other than those necessary for visitor services. As detailed in the potential visitor experience models above, these services could be created through a shared arrangement with other entities. Financial feasibility of a potential new park could also be dependent on donations or partnerships with other public and private entities.

The following estimates are preliminary in nature, are expressed in conservative terms, and do not include a variety of factors that remain unknown, including many start-up planning costs such as the development of a unit management plan or comprehensive interpretive plan. The estimates assume that NPS would not acquire or otherwise own any substantial archives or collections requiring special collection storage facilities. It would be through a special resource study that additional cost analysis would be carried out, such as the identification of total costs of facility ownership associated with establishing Stonewall as a new park unit.

Acquisition

The focus of potential property acquisition in this reconnaissance survey is Christopher Park. As stated above, the NPS would likely seek to acquire property by donation. Complete acquisition costs for Christopher Park are an unknown factor. Donation of Christopher Park by the City of New York is a possibility; however, there would be costs associated with property title work, an environmental site assessment, and appraisals, unless these were also donated. Legislation would also be required to provide the authority for NPS to acquire any property.

In addition to acquisition of Christopher Park, the NPS could potentially obtain easements within the park unit's boundary, such as a façade easement for the Stonewall Inn. As with fee property, the NPS would work with willing landowners for donation of an easement, but additional costs associated with establishing the easements would be the responsibility of the NPS. The NPS could look to partner groups for donations to eliminate some or all of the fees associated with property or easement acquisition.

One-time Startup Maintenance Costs for Christopher Park

Should the NPS acquire Christopher Park, some initial investment in the park's existing features would be likely. The primary cost, repairing the park's pavers, is estimated to be \$12,500.

Annual Operation & Maintenance Costs for Christopher Park

The City of New York currently operates and maintains Christopher Park in cooperation with the Christopher Park Alliance, which maintains a large part of the park's landscaping. The NPS recognizes this valuable partnership and commends Christopher Park Alliance's contributions to the park. A collaborative relationship between the NPS and the Christopher Park Alliance to continue landscape maintenance would be likely.

The NPS would likely take on the facility operation and maintenance costs currently incurred by the city which includes trash collection; snow removal; repairing and maintaining benches and sculptures; as well as providing necessary utilities to the park. These facility-related operational and maintenance costs are estimated to be approximately \$144,000 annually.

Development & Staffing

While this report does not provide great detail regarding future management for Stonewall as a special resource study may provide, the survey does assume that some development to support visitor services would be necessary. The three models for potential visitor experience introduced above are used here to illustrate a range of preliminary costs associated with development and staffing of Stonewall as a new park unit. All assume that Stonewall would share staffing and administrative space with other parks within the Manhattan sites cluster. The staffing numbers in each model represents the additional staffing within the cluster that would be needed to support a potential new unit.

All models would require the development of basic NPS interpretive and educational tools including waysides and park brochures. Development and installation of these tools is estimated to cost \$40,000.

Model 1: Community Partnership – Under the Community Partnership model, development costs would be primarily limited to the costs of waysides, park brochures, and an NPS website as described above. One full-time staff member is expected to be needed to coordinate the partnership component of this model (\$63,000/year). This position could be temporary, only lasting the first few years during park startup, then potentially scaled back to a part-time position. In addition, youth engagement programs would add additional costs to this model. On average, an 8-week, 15 person program costs approximately \$70,000.

Model 2: Newsstand Visitor Center – Development under this model requires the purchase and permitting for a NYC newsstand. One-time capital costs for this would be \$30,000. Biennial permitting fees for newsstands in the City of New York are currently \$1,200. One part-time staff member (\$30,000/year) would be needed under this model.

Model 3: Virtual Visitor Center – The Virtual Visitor Center model has the potential to be the most

expensive option. Startup costs for creating the virtual experience would include development of video, smartphone apps, podcasts, and websites. Startup costs for basic video and application development would cost \$475,000 - \$500,000. One full-time media/exhibit specialist (\$73,000/year) would be needed to provide regular maintenance of the digital media during the initial start-up period of the park. Long-term maintenance of the digital media would also be needed, but could be managed by a regional (multi-park) staff member or through other partnerships and/or contracts.

Conclusion: Likelihood of Meeting Feasibility Criteria

Although a number of unknown variables and assumptions were included within this preliminary feasibility analysis, the limited facilities within the NHL boundary, ease of access, and potential for visitor experience would likely make Stonewall a manageable unit for the NPS. Costs associated with establishment of a new national park would vary depending on the type of management and operational model was selected for the park. Strong partnerships would help to alleviate the NPS costs for operating and maintaining a new park in the long-term. The models discussed above appear to be feasible, provided that land or easement acquisition, whether through donation or purchase from willing sellers, could be arranged. For these reasons, the survey team concludes that Stonewall is likely to meet the feasibility criterion.

Preliminary Evaluation of Need for Direct NPS Management

This criterion is met if a study concludes that a resource meets other designation criteria and that NPS management is clearly superior to any other available form of management. It may find that the resource is immediately threatened and preservation by the NPS is the only alternative available. The NPS does not normally find that direct management is needed to manage resources already adequately protected by state, local, or private entities.

The NPS is a preservation agency whose management practices emphasizes resource protection and visitor enjoyment, as stated in the NPS Organic Act. The City of New York has been providing resource protection of the Stonewall area since the Greenwich Village Historic District was designated in 1969. Once designated, structures within a historic district fall under the regulations of the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission. The Landmarks Preservation Commission actively works with landowners within historic districts to protect the city's historically significant buildings, including the Stonewall Inn. In addition to being located within a historic district, the Stonewall Inn is also listed as an individual landmark for its association with the city's LGBT history. In terms of resource protection, the survey team believes that the preservation efforts provided by the City of New York under the city's landmark program are adequate to protect the structures within the Stonewall NHL boundary.

The Stonewall area, however, lacks the coordinated educational and interpretive opportunities which would inform visitors about the site's history and national significance. The events that occurred at Stonewall had national implications and became a catalyst for additional LGBT struggles which would eventually lead to changes in national policy and cultural shifts with openly LGBT-related themes. The NPS is well-known and respected for its expertise in interpretation and education, and on its own, or in partnership with others, is likely to increase the level of understanding of Stonewall's national significance.

Conclusion: Likelihood of Meeting Need for NPS Management Criteria

The City of New York already provides a high level of resource protection for the structural resources within and immediately surrounding the Stonewall NHL boundary, including the Stonewall Inn and Christopher Park. To reinforce that protection, the NPS could acquire additional preservation easements over certain interests within the NHL boundary, providing protection to additional resources beyond those which are protected by the city.

The NPS has the ability to provide a greater level of recognition to Stonewall and place those important events in the context of a nationally significant movement. NPS management, in partnership with other agencies and organizations, would likely be the best option for protecting the property's significant resources and for providing a greater depth of interpretation and education opportunities for visitors. The survey team concludes that it is likely that Stonewall would result in a positive finding for the need for NPS management.

Reconnaissance Survey Conclusions

This reconnaissance survey concludes that Stonewall meets the new unit criterion for national significance. Because Stonewall was previously designated as a national historic landmark, its cultural resources have been determined to meet the criterion.

This study similarly concludes that the resources associated with Stonewall are likely to be found to meet the suitability criterion in a special resource study. While there are a number of other sites which are associated with LGBT history, most of these sites are focused solely on individuals and their experiences. In addition, most are privately-owned and not open to the public. The survey team found that Stonewall likely offers an educational and interpretive opportunity to tell the broader, national story of the LGBT movement, an opportunity which is not already represented within the national park system or through other agencies and organizations.

Finally, this survey concludes that the resources are likely to meet both the feasibility criterion and the need for NPS management criterion. The survey team believes that a national park unit for Stonewall would benefit from the establishment of partnerships with the City of New York and other organizations, such as the Christopher Park Alliance and nearby LGBT advocacy groups. Establishment of a new national park has the potential to bring these groups together in a common effort.

It is the conclusion of this preliminary evaluation that Stonewall has the potential to meet the criteria for inclusion in the national park system. Therefore, the NPS finds that further study is warranted and recommends that a full special resource study be considered to fully analyze the criteria, provide an opportunity for public involvement, and investigate potential management alternatives.

APPENDIX 1

SELECTED CORRESPONDENCE



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

Honorable Jonathan Jarvis
Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

August 28, 2015

Dear Director Jarvis,

We write regarding the effort to create a new National Park recognizing the significance of the Stonewall Rebellion as the seminal event of the modern lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights movement.

On June 28, 1969, the Stonewall Inn, as well as the surrounding streets and neighboring Christopher Park, was the site of an uprising by the LGBT community, which demanded an end to police harassment, arrests and raids on LGBT establishments, launching a civil rights struggle that continues today. A Stonewall National Park would be the first unit within the National Park system dedicated to the history of LGBT Americans.

With the significance of this history in mind, we request that the National Park Service (NPS) undertake a reconnaissance survey of the area encompassed by, and surrounding, the Stonewall Inn National Historic Landmark, to evaluate the feasibility of designating a monument.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jerrold Nadler in black ink.

JERROLD NADLER
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Kirsten Gillibrand in blue ink.

KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator

APPENDIX 2

CONTRIBUTORS & PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS

Contributors and Project Team Members

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APPENDIX 3

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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

United States Department of the Interior – National Park Service