



# Foundation Document Overview

## Minute Man National Historical Park

### Massachusetts



#### Contact Information

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## Purpose



*The purpose of MINUTE MAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK is to preserve and interpret the significant historic structures and landscapes associated with the opening of the American Revolution which lie along the route of battle of April 19, 1775, and to foster understanding of the events, causes, and consequences of the American Revolution. Another purpose of Minute Man National Historical Park is to preserve and interpret The Wayside, home of major 19th-century American authors.*



## Significance

Significance statements express why Minute Man National Historic Park resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- Minute Man National Historical Park, created in 1959 in Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord, Massachusetts, preserves and interprets the sites, structures, and landscapes—the Battle Road, farmsteads, stonewalls, fields, orchards, and homes—that became the field of battle during the first armed conflict of the American Revolution on April 19, 1775.
- It was here that British colonists risked their lives and property, defending their rights and their ideals of liberty and self-determination. The events that day have been popularized by succeeding generations as the “shot heard round the world.”
- The Wayside is significant as the successive home of authors Louisa May Alcott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Margaret Sidney, whose lives and works contributed to a unique American literary identity that emerged from the experiences of their Revolutionary War ancestors.



## Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.



- Battle Road Unit – Battle Road and Cultural Landscape
- Battle Road Unit – Historic Structures
- North Bridge Unit
- The Wayside Unit
- Barrett's Farm Unit
- Collections
- Archeological Resources
- Contemplative Visitor Experience

## Other Important Resources and Values

Minute Man National Historical Park may contain other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values. There may also be related resources and values, which are located outside the park boundary, but help interpret the park's story and should be an object of preservation.



Minute Man National Historical Park has the following important resources and values:

- Natural Resources
- Recreational Opportunities

## Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- Lexington and Concord: Opening Battles of the American Revolution

**Theme Statement:** Few Americans were yet ready to contemplate independence from Great Britain, but when militiamen fired at and killed the king's soldiers on April 19, 1775, it was a watershed event that compelled people in each of the 13 colonies to take a stand.

- The "Embattled Farmers" Defend Their Way of Life

**Theme Statement:** Despite their largely English origins and participation in the British imperial economy, the militiamen who responded on April 19, 1775, felt that their way of life was now threatened by British aggression.

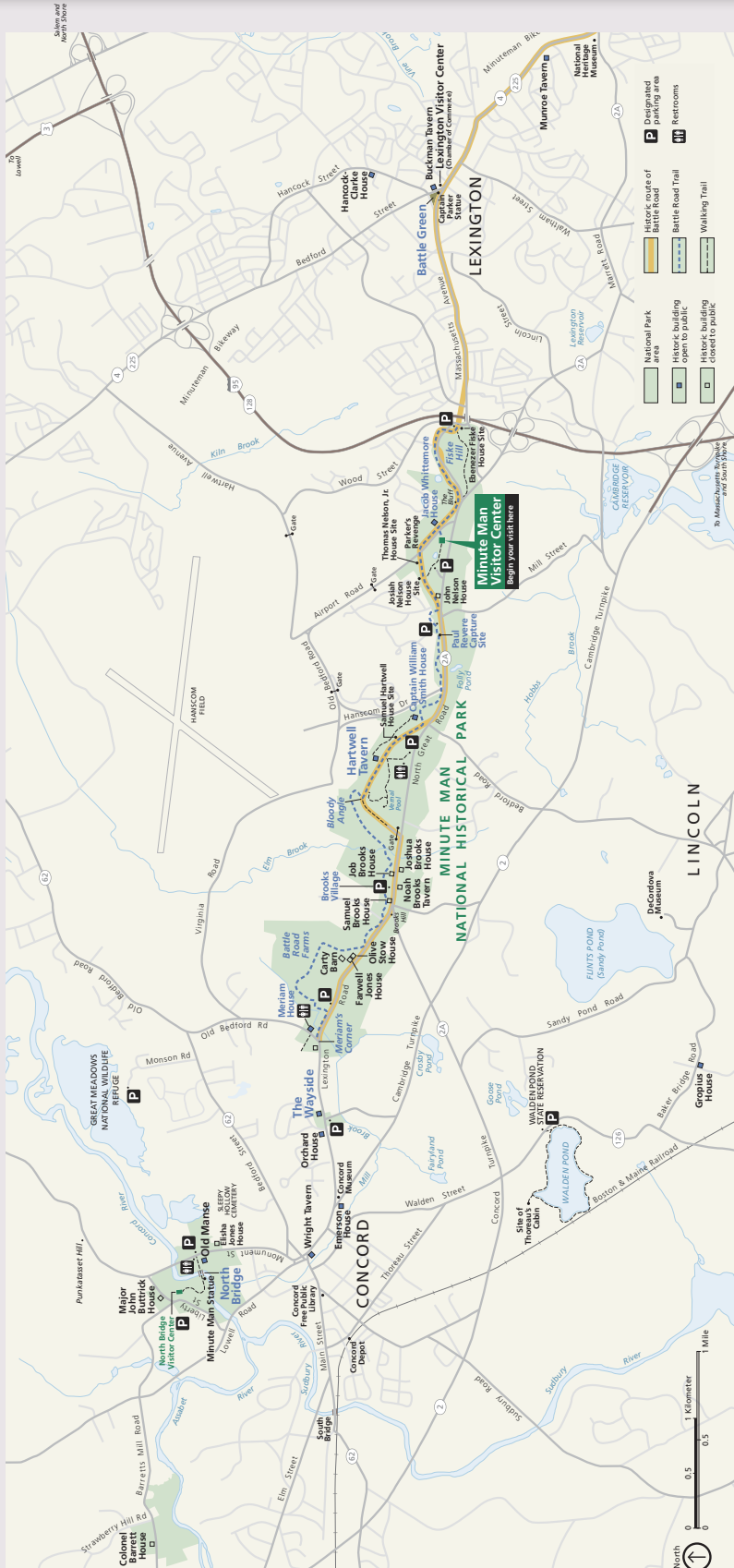
- April 19, 1775 in Memory: Shaping an American Identity

**Theme Statement:** Almost immediately, the dramatic events of April 19 were incorporated into an American creation story, used initially to justify opposition to the British crown and later to help define a national identity, and to understand the world from which the minute men came forward.

- The Wayside and the Legacy of the American Revolution

**Theme Statement:** At The Wayside, eminent authors, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Louisa May Alcott, were at the center of developing a cultural identity for a newly independent nation.

# Description



Minute Man National Historical Park is located in Concord, Lexington, and Lincoln, Massachusetts. The park was established by P.L. 86-321 in 1959. After completion of the 1991 general management plan, P.L. 102-488 (1992) broadened the park's strategic mission and expanded the park boundary, especially along the Battle Road. P.L. 111-11 (2009) expanded the park boundary to incorporate Barrett's Farm, the home of the 1775 commander of the Middlesex Militia, Colonel James Barrett. Comprising 1,038 acres, the park preserves historic sites, structures, properties, and landscapes associated with the opening battles of the American Revolution, which occurred April 19, 1775. It also preserves resources related to America's literary tradition. Minute Man National Historical Park is located approximately 16 miles northwest of Boston, Massachusetts. The region surrounding the park has developed from a semi-rural area to mature suburbs and experiences continual growth pressures. Growth from residential, commercial, and industrial development has increased impacts from traffic, noise, and density in and around the park. The park attracts more than one million visitors each year.

Minute Man National Historical Park has four units:

- Battle Road Unit
- North Bridge Unit
- The Wayside Unit
- Barrett's Farm Unit