



Foundation Document Overview

Tumacácori National Historical Park

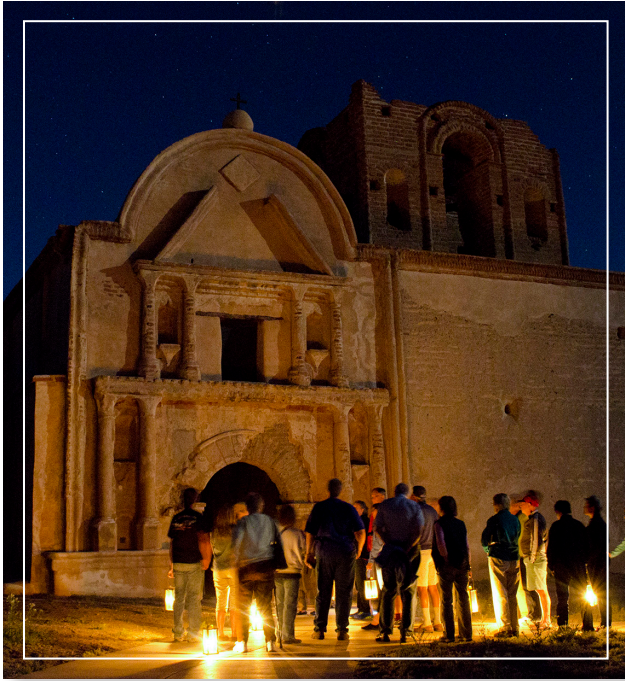
Arizona



Contact Information

For more information about the *Tumacácori National Historical Park Foundation Document*, contact: tuma_superintendent@nps.gov or (520) 377-5060 or write to:
Superintendent, Tumacácori National Historical Park, Post Office Box 8067, 1891 East Frontage Road,
Tumacácori, AZ 85640

Purpose



The purpose of TUMACÁCORI NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK is to protect, preserve, and interpret the natural and cultural heritage resources of the Jesuit and Franciscan missions of San José de Tumacácori, San Cayetano de Calabazas, and Los Santos Ángeles de Guevavi; and to provide access and educational opportunities for the public to understand the cultural interactions between native and European peoples in the Santa Cruz River valley from the 17th century to today.



Significance

Significance statements express why Tumacácori National Historical 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.

- The cultural resources of Tumacácori National Historical Park collectively represent the culture of native peoples before and after the arrival of Europeans as well as the Spanish effort to colonize the Santa Cruz River valley through the Jesuit and Franciscan missionization of its native people. Tumacácori National Historical Park is the only NPS unit displaying an entire, original institutionalized Spanish mission landscape.

In addition to the physical structures and features, Tumacácori National Historical Park preserves a record of the social and political hierarchy that was overlaid on the existing American Indian communities.

- Tumacácori National Historical Park is one of the few NPS venues that regularly teaches and incorporates traditional architectural preservation techniques in partnership with international, local, and native communities.
- All three mission sites contain some of the best remaining examples of Spanish Mission period architectural styles, including original materials, features, and construction techniques.
- Tumacácori National Historical Park maintains a record of cultural interaction, continuity, and change before, during, and after contact with Europeans. Today the park recognizes the distinct lifeways and the range of cultures that have existed since people were part of the landscape.
- The landscapes at the three mission sites and the broader natural and cultural resources of the Santa Cruz River valley contain important elements of the environment that sustained people before, during, and after the missions were established. These features now allow visitors and residents to imagine and understand the different communities' relationships to these landscapes over time.

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.

- **Mission San José de Tumacácori.** Mission San José de Tumacácori is a nearly complete mission complex. It is an excellent example of original 1800s Franciscan mission architecture with a number of distinctive, well-preserved features including a round mortuary chapel, scalloped niches, and an outstanding example of stenciled art, frescoes, murals, and original gypsum and plaster finishes.
- **Mission Los Santos Ángeles de Guevavi.** Mission Los Santos Ángeles de Guevavi is the only preserved earthen Jesuit cabecera in the United States. The site is relatively undisturbed and contains remnants of the first mission church built in what is today Arizona.
- **Mission San Cayetano de Calabazas.** Mission San Cayetano de Calabazas includes the only known remaining standing Spanish colonial visita in the national park system. Calabazas preserves a history of diverse and extensive adaptive reuse including a mission period visita and ganadera, Mexican governor's residence, U.S. cavalry camp, customs house, and a post office.
- **Cultural Continuity.** Tumacácori National Historical Park is situated on ancestral lands of the O'odham, whose preexisting settlements influenced the location of the mission sites. The mission sites serve as tangible links to the past by providing connections to both personal heritage and general history of individuals, families, and groups. Collectively, they represent a blending of cultures that have resulted in a living "Mexican" and "Southwestern" culture.
- **Landscapes.** The distinct character of the landscape at each of the three sites offers a range of visitor experiences that provide opportunities for imaginative and personal insights into past and ongoing changes within the Santa Cruz River valley. The landscapes and landforms surrounding Tumacácori National Historical Park are sacred to native peoples.
- **Preservation Program.** Tumacácori National Historical Park serves as a model and venue for teaching and maintaining traditional historic preservation techniques. The park's historic preservation program fosters partnerships that promote community involvement by mentoring on traditional preservation methods and technologies.

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.

- The long history of the missions of Tumacácori National Historical Park serves as a doorway to the rich and complex stories of cultural encounter, cooperation, conflict, accommodation, and resistance that characterized the efforts of the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church to establish colonies in northern New Spain and missionize the native peoples.
- The Jesuits and Franciscans, in their efforts to modify the landscape and create a social order familiar to Europeans, attempted to impose their systems and institutions on the native peoples. Their responses exemplify the ability of individuals and cultures to adapt, survive, and retain identity and community coherence in the face of pervasive change.
- Tumacácori National Historical Park continues to be a vital and vibrant focal point celebrating the cultures and communities associated with the Santa Cruz River valley—a meeting place and social center serving to perpetuate, celebrate, honor, and appreciate traditions and explore change.
- The diversity and integrity of the architectural resources of Tumacácori National Historical Park and its more than 100 years of federal management provide outstanding opportunities to understand the history, science, and art of historic preservation.
- The distinctive evolution and current character of the landscapes of Tumacácori National Historical Park are reflective of the enduring relationships between people and places—illustrating how people change, and are in turn changed, by the natural environment.

Description

Tumacácori National Historical Park is located in southern Arizona, 18 miles north of the United States–Mexico border and 43 miles south of Tucson. The park protects three Spanish colonial mission ruins: San José de Tumacácori (Tumacácori), Los Santos Ángeles de Guevavi (Guevavi), and San Cayetano de Calabazas (Calabazas). All park facilities are located at the Tumacácori unit, where visitors access the park through the Tumacácori Visitor Center. The Guevavi and Calabazas units are open to the public only as part of a Tumacácori National Historical Park guided tour.

Missions Tumacácori and Guevavi, established in 1691, were among more than 20 missions founded by Jesuit Father Eusebio Francisco Kino. These missions were established in the region known to the Spanish as the Pimería Alta, stretching from what is now Sonora, Mexico, through southern Arizona. Calabazas is first recorded in the mission register in 1756. The construction of the existing Tumacácori church began around 1800 under the administration of Franciscan missionaries.

Tumacácori was established as Tumacácori National Monument on September 15, 1908, by President Theodore Roosevelt. Subsequent legislation added the Guevavi and Calabazas units and changed the designation to national historical park in 1990. An additional 310 acres surrounding the Tumacácori unit, including a one-mile stretch of the Santa Cruz River and adjacent riparian area, gallery forest, and mesquite bosque (forest), were added to the national historical park in 2002. Tumacácori National Historical Park includes a one-mile stretch of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.

The park protects the standing and subsurface ruins of the churches, conventos, and parts of the community grounds of the Tumacácori, Guevavi, and Calabazas missions. Along with these ruins, which date to the 1700–1800s, the park also contains subsurface and surface scatter remains of pre-mission O’odham and prehistoric Hohokam and Trincheras cultures, as well as post-mission settlement.

The three missions are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and the Guevavi and Calabazas missions are also designated national historic landmarks. The Tumacácori Visitor Center and Museum, built in 1937, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is designated a national historic landmark. The visitor center, original museum dioramas, wall surrounding the original park boundary, and the two 1930s era residences are excellent examples of NPS rustic architecture and New Deal era craftsmanship. The National Park Service maintains extensive associated archives and museum collections that preserve artifacts and information that contribute to cultural identity. Tumacácori National Historical Park preserves records including archeological resources, oral histories, written documents, and pertinent databases.

The landscapes of Tumacácori National Historical Park provided resources important for development of communities before, during, and after the Spanish arrived in the area. The Guevavi and Calabazas units consist of desert scrub and mesquite bosque environments. The Santa Cruz River flows through the Tumacácori unit; approximately one mile of endangered Southwest cottonwood-willow riparian habitat are protected within the unit.

