National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2013

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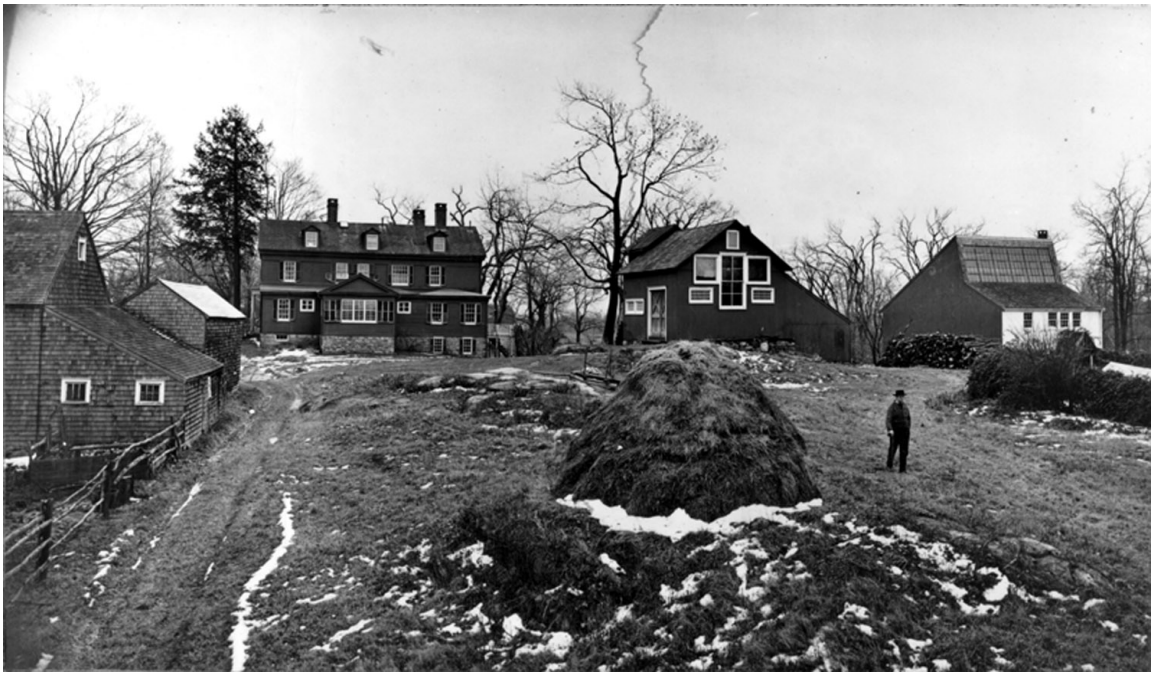

Weir Farm NHS Landscape

Weir Farm National Historical Park

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Introduction

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the National Park System. Landscapes that are listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources and in which the National Park Service has, or plans to acquire, legal interest are included in the inventory. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, and condition. Cultural landscapes have approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into the Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS-CL) database. In addition, for landscapes not currently listed on the National Register and/or without adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, or the Keeper of the National Register.

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is compiled from primary and secondary sources and through on-site surveys of the landscape. The level of investigation is dependent upon scoping the need for information. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's integrity and an assessment of the landscape's condition. The CLI also includes historic maps, drawings, and images; photographs of existing conditions; and a site plan that indicates major features. The CLI documents the existing condition of park landscape resources and identifies impacts, threats, and measures to stabilize condition. This information can be used to develop strategies for improved stewardship. Unlike a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), the CLI does not provide management recommendations or treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape, but it may identify stabilization measures.

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources, and cultural landscapes. Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS) replaces three legacy inventory systems: ASMIS (archeology), CLI (cultural landscapes), and LCS (historic structures); and it reinstates the former ERI (ethnographic resources). This Cultural Landscape Inventory document reflects the information in a corresponding CRIS Cultural Landscape record.

Statutory and Regulatory Foundation

The legislative, regulatory, and policy directives for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are:

- National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)) Sec. 110
- Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3 (a and c)
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs
- Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Std. 2
- Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22; issued pursuant to Director's Order #28 (DO-28)

The NHPA requires the identification, evaluation, and nomination of historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places and the maintenance and expansion of an inventory of cultural resources. DO-28 requires a cyclic assessment of the current condition of cultural landscapes based on an assessment interval, with a default of six years.

Use

Beyond fulfilling legal and policy requirements, park staff can use the Cultural Landscape Inventory in the following ways:

- To learn about park cultural landscapes (all staff)
- To inform management decisions (park managers)
- To inform project planning and development (park managers, facility managers, project managers, compliance specialists)
- To monitor the condition of the cultural landscape and take measures to protect its significance and integrity (cultural resource managers, facility managers)
- To recognize the stabilization and treatment needs of landscape features and plan work within cultural landscapes to address the needs (facility managers, cultural resource managers)
- To understand the cultural value of natural systems in a cultural landscape (natural resource managers)
- To create programming and educational materials based on site history (interpretation and education specialists)
- To recognize impacts within cultural landscapes and enforce protection measures (visitor and resources protection staff)

General Information

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Weir Farm NHS Landscape

Resource Classification: Cultural Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 650059

Parent Landscape: 650059

Inventory Status: Complete

Park Information

Park Name: Weir Farm National Historical Park

Alpha Code: WEFA

Park Organization Code: 1953

Park District: WEFA

Region: Northeast

Restricted: No

Landscape Description:

The 67-acre Weir Farm National Historic Site (NHS) is located in southwestern Connecticut within the townships of Ridgefield and Wilton, in a small community known as Branchville. Weir Farm NHS preserves the home and studio of American Impressionist Julian Alden Weir (1852-1919), as well as the landscape that inspired his paintings and those by other artists with which he associated. The park also contains the studio of sculptor Mahonri Young (1877-1957), who was the husband of Weir's daughter Dorothy. The Weir Farm NHS Landscape is comprised of three distinct historic areas defined by the intersection of Nod Hill Road and Pelham Lane: the 10-acre Weir Complex, 10-acre Burlingham Complex, and 39-acre Pond and Woodland Area, as well as an 8-acre non-historic administrative area to the north.

Weir Complex:
The Weir Complex lies north of Pelham Lane and west of Nod Hill Road and is surrounded by suburban residential properties. Representing the historic core of the larger 238-acre farm that Weir purchased between 1882 and 1907, the Weir Complex today features a farmhouse, the Weir studio and Young studio, a barn, several farm outbuildings, and a secluded garden. Since the mid-1990s, the park has completed many projects that preserve and enhance historic landscape character and address park management, interpretive, and visitor services objectives.

The Weir Complex is comprised of distinct domestic and agricultural areas linked together by picket fences and stone walls. The area immediately surrounding the Weir house, likely referred to as the "dooryard" by Weir and his family, features a combination of rustic fencing, ornamental planting, and relatively level topography that together define a specific embellished landscape space. Functionally, this ensemble of landscape features supported the daily lives of the park's three generations of artists and included activity in ornamental and recreational gardening. The agricultural area extends north from the domestic grounds and includes the Weir barn, tack house, and various outbuildings and animal enclosures. This area is vegetated in nearly equal parts of woodland and rough-cut meadow grasses and also includes an informally arranged orchard and the stone pig pens west of the Young studio.

Burlingham Complex:
The Burlingham Complex lies South of Pelham Lane and west of Nod Hill Road and is surrounded by conservation

land known as the Weir Preserve. Named for Weir's daughter Cora and her husband Charles Burlingham, the Burlingham Complex features a main house, barn, woodshed, potting shed, and sunken garden. Since the mid-1990s, the park has completed many projects that preserve and enhance historic landscape character and address park management, interpretive, and visitor services objectives.

The Burlingham Complex is comprised of distinct domestic and agricultural areas linked together by stone walls. Arrayed around a former dwelling, the domestic grounds feature a number of finely crafted masonry features, including a rustic stone entrance terrace, a sunken garden defined on three sides by a substantial stone retaining wall, dressed stone stairs, and a potting shed crafted from tooled ashlar blocks of local granite. The surrounding agricultural areas consist of various agricultural buildings and outlying meadows. A barn and woodshed are located at the western end of the Burlingham driveway, centrally positioned to service the fields. The placement of these two buildings, flanked by stone walls, creates a barnyard court opened to the west and east. Five fields, bordered by stone walls, are situated around the barn and woodshed. The three western fields and the field furthest south abut the Weir Preserve. The southwest portion of the southern field contains an orchard.

Pond and Woodland Area:
The Pond and Woodland Area lies to the east of Nod Hill Road and is surrounded by suburban residential properties and open space parcels owned by the Town of Ridgefield and the State of Connecticut. Named for the pond and dam Weir had constructed in the late nineteenth century, the Pond and Woodland Area also features a Caretaker's house and artist-in-residence studio. Since the mid-1990s, the park has completed many projects that preserve and enhance historic landscape character and address park management, interpretive, and visitor services objectives.

The Pond and Woodland Area is comprised of distinct domestic and agricultural areas linked together by picket fences and stone walls. The domestic grounds occupy a small area along the east side of Nod Hill Road and contain the Caretaker's house and rehabilitated garage/barn linked by a gravel driveway and set within lawns dotted with trees and shrubs. At the south end of this area is a visitor parking lot constructed in 1993. The agricultural areas dominate the remainder of this land to the north and east and contain alternating bands of uplands and lowlands that support a dense forested canopy created by a variety of hardwood trees, an extant meadow, intermittent streams, and wetlands. A path leads to the pond and dam at the eastern end of this area.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Pre- J. Alden Weir Ownership, to 1882:
Prior to J. Alden Weir's arrival at the farm in Branchville in 1882, the Beers and Webb families owned the land around the intersec¬tion of Nod Hill Road and Pelham Lane. In 1789, Anthony Beers purchased two contiguous parcels originally granted by the Ridgefield Pro¬prietors in 1745. According to deed records, Beers' purchase included a dwelling house on the northwest corner of the intersection. Architectural investigations revealed the house was likely constructed between 1760 and 1781. Anthony Beers purchased a third contiguous parcel in 1797 and the combined property remained in the Beers family following Anthony's death in 1820. Anthony's son, Lewis, purchased other adjoining properties and added a barn and other agricultural outbuildings. An 1861 probate inventory listed on Lewis Beers' property a main farmhouse, small dwelling house, carriage house, barn and cow houses, wash house, and hog house (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:6-7).

In 1880, the heirs of Lewis Beers sold the property to the Gilbert & Bennett Man¬ufacturing Company, a local company with ties to the Beers family. That same year, the company sold the property to Connecticut native and silver mine owner Erwin Davis. Interested in collecting art, Davis hired aspiring artist J. Alden Weir to take a European tour and purchase paintings in the summer of 1880. Having completed his studies in Paris at the École des Beaux-Arts, Weir had returned to the United States in 1877 to begin his art career, focusing on portraits and still life painting. In 1882 Davis transferred ownership of his farm property to Weir in exchange for a paint¬ing Weir had bought for $560 and an additional ten dollars (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:6-7).

J. Alden Weir Ownership, 1882-1919:
Weir's 153-acre farm was located in the southeast section of the Town of Ridgefield and bordered the Town of Wilton. This area was known as Branchville because it was the beginning of a branch rail line of the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad that extend¬ed to Ridgefield Village. Many of Weir's artworks and correspondence reference Branchville or his Branchville farm. Weir and his first wife Anna Baker maintained a residence in New York City near Weir's studio in Washington Square and traveled to the Branchville farm for weekend retreats. They also resided at the farm continuously from May until the late fall. (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

The first major change to the property during Weir's tenure occurred in 1885. By that summer, Weir constructed a studio north of the main house and west of the barn. The architect of the studio is unknown, but sty¬listic evidence indicates that noted artist and architect Charles Platt may have influenced the design (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

In the 1880s and 1890s, Weir's painting transitioned in subject matter and style. He began experimenting with painting landscapes and the rural scenes around his Branchville farm. Painting with his associates John Henry Twachtman and Childe Hassam, Weir's work began to emphasize patterns of color and light instead of a strict attention to detail. Critics began identifying Weir, often disparagingly, as an Impressionist (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

In addition to working on his own art, Weir hosted other contemporary artists at Branchville such as Albert Pinkham Ryder, John Singer Sargent, J. Appleton Brown, and Wil¬liam Glackens. While some of these visits were simply social calls, other visitors, such as Hassam, used their time on the farm to paint, sketch, and experi¬ment in new representational techniques that were being recognized as American Impressionism (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

In 1895, Weir submitted his painting "The Truants" to a competition organized by the Boston Art Club. The painting is of a scene looking west across a meadow on the east side of Nod Hill Road. In the foreground, two boys hide in a hollow that rises up to a stone wall along the road. The painting won first place and with the prize money, Weir purchased 10 acres of land east of Nod Hill Road in 1896. On the newly purchased property, Weir directed the construction of a dam and pond that encompassed around 3.5 acres. By the 1890s, the farm also featured sapling fences, rustic arbors and bridges, hen runs, and informal gardens. Correspondence from the period credits an Alsa¬tian immigrant, Paul Remy, with creating these small-scale features. Remy and his family worked as farmers and caretaker's on the property between 1890 and circa 1907 (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

Weir's contribution to the establishment of American Impressionism included more than his paintings and eventual critical success. Dissatisfied with the exhibi¬tion practices of the Society of American Artists, Weir became one of the founders of The Ten American Painters in late 1897. "The Ten," as they were known, became recognized as the core group of American Impressionism and Weir exhibited with the group until it disbanded in 1919 (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

During the first decades of the 1900s, Weir directed two renovations to the main house in Branchville and purchased additional adjoining land that brought his total farm property to 238 acres. Weir commissioned Architect Charles Platt to design an expansion of the main house that elongated the structure to the west and formalized the entrance on the south facade off of Pelham Lane. Workers completed the expansion between 1900 and 1901, and a decade later, Weir employed Frederick J. Adam of the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White to design a dining room addition to the north of the house (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

Weir also increased the size of the farm through several land purchases. In 1900 he bought 32 acres west of Nod Hill Road and north of Pelham Lane from Anna Eliza Smith, and in 1907 purchased the 50 acre Webb farm to the south of Pelham Lane. The Webb farm originated from a 1748 grant comprised of a 41-acre and 9-acre parcel in common land known as Rock¬house Woods. A 1782 deed listed a main house on the 9-acre parcel and in 1832, Jared Webb purchased that property. Webb purchased the adjoining 41 acres in 1843 and by that time, a barn stood on the property along with the main house. By 1855 William Webb, Jared's son, owned the entire 50-acre property. Weir's intentions for purchasing the Webb farm are not documented, but the new property may have been a preemptive purchase against development that would threaten the rural setting of his farm (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7 -8).

Illness struck Weir in the summer of 1919 and he was unable to recover, passing away on December 8, 1919. During his tenure, Weir had expanded his farm property to 238 acres, remodeled the main house, constructed a studio and agricul¬tural outbuildings, developed a pond on the eastern portion of the property, and added the Secret Garden and other gardens and rustic features such as the fence along the public roads (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:7-8).

Post-J.Alden Weir Ownership, 1919-1990:
Weir bequeathed his Branchville property to his second wife Ella Baker and daughters Caroline (Caro), Cora, and Dorothy. Caro and Cora transferred their rights to the property to Ella and Dorothy in 1922. During this period, Ella and Dorothy spent summers at the Branchville farm and continued employing ten-ant farmers year round. Farming

and gardening continued, but there is no indication from available resources that major changes occurred at the property. In the early 1920s, Dorothy met the sculptor Mahonri Young in New York City. Young, grandson of Mormon pioneer Brigham Young, had completed commissions for the Mormon Church including the 1913 Seagull Monument erected in Temple Square, Salt Lake City. Ma¬honri and Dorothy were married in February 1931, a few months after Ella passed away. The couple initially continued Weir's practice of dividing time between New York City and the Branchville farm (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:8-9).

Dorothy Weir and Mahonri Young intended to spend more than the summer months at Branchville, and in the summer of 1931 they installed electrical service and a central heating system at the main house. That same year, Dorothy trans¬ferred ownership of the 50-acre Webb property to her sister Cora and her hus-band Charles Burlingham. The Burlinghams maintained their property south of Pelham Lane independently from the Youngs. By the early 1940s, the Burlinghams had renovated the property's main house and barn, installed a stone terrace south of the house, added a stone potting shed, directed the construction of the Sunken Garden, and employed local masons from the Knoche family to construct new stone walls around the perimeter of their property (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:9-10).

During the same time period, Dorothy Weir and Mahonri Young were active in improving the Weir Farm to meet their needs. Mahonri Young directed the construction of a second studio at the property in 1932, designed by Young's son-in-law Oliver Lay and located west of the Weir Studio. Lay, son of the noted landscape architect Charles Downing Lay, had recently graduated from the Columbia Uni¬versity School of Architecture and would go on to work for the New York City Parks Department and later as a site planner for the architectural firm York and Sawyer. With a dedicated studio completed, Young created figures and friezes for the monumental sculpture "This Is the Place." The 1947 sculpture commemorates the location where Brigham Young entered the Salt Lake Valley. Young also produced numerous sketches that document the changes and everyday use of Weir Farm during his and Dorothy's tenure (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:9-10).

By circa 1940, the Youngs had added a terraced vegetable garden west of the main house, constructed a wagon shed and animal shelter, and converted a pre-existing ice house to a chicken house. In addition, the Bass family, then living at the Care¬taker's house, had added a three-car garage south of their residence. Young's numerous sketches also record arbors and trellises in the landscape, maintenance on stone walls, harvesting apples in the orchard, and small-scale crop production and animal husbandry. Following Dorothy Weir Young's death in 1947, Mahonri spent increasingly less time at Weir Farm. Agricultural activity diminished and successional growth developed in the fields and meadows (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:9-10).

In 1952, Mahonri Young prepared an introduction for a catalog accompanying an exhibit of Julian Alden Weir's work. Sperry Andrews, an artist who visited the ex¬hibit and lived in Ridgefield, visited Young at Weir Farm. The two became friends and after Young's death in 1957, Sperry and his wife Doris purchased the core of the farm from Young's heirs (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:9-10).

Doris and Sperry Andrews became the next generation of resident artists at Weir Farm when they purchased the property in 1958. Like Weir and Young before him, Sperry painted the landscape and subtle outdoor features of Weir Farm. Described as a "painter's painter," Sperry was noted for his dedication and practice of completing paintings entirely outdoors throughout the year. His paintings were featured at one-man exhibitions and are part of the permanent collections at the Wadsworth Athene¬um, the Columbus Gallery of Fine Art, the National Academy of Design, and the New Britain Museum of American Art (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:10).

Doris and Sperry Andrews made few changes to the property during their tenure. Woody vegetation continued to encroach on agricultural fields that had been farmed before World War II. Lacking regular use and routine maintenance, both the wagon shed and the Caretaker's carriage house collapsed during the later years of the Andrews' tenure. Plantings requiring a high level of maintenance, such as the Secret Garden and vegetable garden terraces, lost the quantity and quality of plant material they had once possessed. The greatest change to Weir Farm occurred on surrounding properties with the subdivision of large farming parcels and the construction of suburban housing following the end of World War II (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:10).

Working with Cora Weir Burlingham and other local supporters, Doris and Sperry Andrews were instrumental in preserving Weir Farm. In 1983, the Citizens to Preserve the Weir Farm and other interested groups asked the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for assistance. The TPL became a provisional land manager during the preservation process, purchasing and holding much of the Weir Farm. In 1984, portions of the farm formerly owned by Weir were designated as the J. Alden Weir Farm Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places.

Weir Farm National Historic Site, 1990-Present:
In 1989, members of the Citizens to Preserve the Weir Farm, led by Doris and Sperry Andrews, formed the Weir Farm Heritage Trust, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the property. The group received assistance and funding from the TPL. At this time, the National Park Service conducted a study to evaluate the feasibility and merit of including Weir Farm within the National Park System. The favorable findings lead to legislation establishing Weir Farm National Historic Site in 1990. The Andrews' retained a life tenancy with the creation of the new park and continued to reside at the Weir House until 2005. The National Park Service has managed the park with a goal of preserving and interpreting the artistic period of the farm from 1882 to 1957. To that end, the park has undertaken numerous restoration and rehabilitation projects within the physical landscape of Weir Farm (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012:10).

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Weir Farm National Historic Site is significant under criteria A, B, C, and D in the National Register of Historic Places. The park has national significance in the area of art as the home and workplace of American painter Julian Alden Weir from 1882 to 1919, as well as for American sculptor and Weir's son-in-law, Mahonri M. Young from 1931 to 1957. The property is also nationally significant for its contributions to the American Impressionist art movement and as a retreat not just for Weir but for famed Impressionists including Childe Hassam, John Twatchmen, and other members of the Ten American Painters, or "The Ten." The park is locally significant in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture for its overall setting as expressed in the buildings, landscape, and features assembled on the site. Weir was drawn to this location by the beauty of the existing farms, and went to great lengths to preserve the rural setting and farm the land. The park also exhibits national significance in the area of archeology for the proven ability of numerous archeological sites to yield information important to the interpretation and understanding of the lives, families, and works of Julian Alden Weir, Mahonri Young, and other artists inspired by the beauty of this landscape.

The primary periods of significance for the Weir Farm NHS are from 1760-1882 and 1882-1957. The first historic period begins with the initial construction dates of the Weir house and continues through the occupation of the Beers and Webb families. The second historic period begins when Weir assumed ownership of the property, continuing through the years when Young owned and lived at the property and when the property was used as an artists' retreat, and ends with the death of Young. A third period of significance, 2000-1200 B.P., acknowledges archeological resources, which are beyond the scope of this CLI and are therefore not addressed beyond information provided in National Register documentation. The archeological period of significance is for the pre-contact archeological component, defined by the recovery of a Woodland period projectile point and understanding of regional settlement patterns.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

The physical integrity of the three component landscapes is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the historic periods of significance (1760-1882, 1882-1957) with current conditions.

Weir Complex:
Many of the historic characteristics and features at the Weir Complex remain today. Natural systems and features, characterized by a distinct woodland-meadow pattern overlaid on sloping terrain, are intact. The spaces and features that inspired the artistic works of J. Alden Weir, Mahonri Young, and others—the house, studios, and domestic areas near the corner of Pelham Lane and Nod Hill Road, and the surrounding gardens, animal enclosures, and agricultural features—are present and still intact. The three most important buildings—Weir house (1760-1778), Weir studio (1885 -1886), and Young studio (1932)—have been restored and are open to the public. A barn, tack house, ice house/chicken house, corn crib, and chicken coop remain, as do stone pig pens, well structures, a dog house, picket fencing, stone boundary and retaining walls, and a stone picnic table with Weir's initials carved into it. Many of these features have also been repaired and restored. A gravel driveway and various stone paths and stone steps link many of these features together. Plantings at the site include the ornamental Secret Garden, an orchard, and other trees, shrubs, and lawns. Sites and views chosen for many of the paintings executed by Weir, Young, and their contemporaries remain intact and are easily discerned on the property.

Since 1957, the most notable structures that have been lost at the Weir Complex are the wagon shed, which collapsed around 1980, and the wood painting deck at the Weir studio. Other features such as the rustic Adirondack-style canopy atop the well, the wood pile between the two studios, the haystack, and the Weir mailbox are gone, and the

scalding vat now resides next the Young studio instead of near the wagon shed. The upper terrace of the vegetable garden is presently extant with its boundaries defined by the dry-laid stone wall, but the rows of plant material have been replaced with lawn turf. Some trees and shrubs throughout the grounds have been removed due to disease or old age, and some foundation plantings are missing due to recent utility upgrades at the house. Perhaps the most notable change at the Weir Complex is that the land is no longer farmed, which in some areas gradually allowed young trees and shrubs to grow and mature. Since the late 1990s, however, the park has attempted to redefine the boundaries between field and forest vegetation, although not always following the historic boundaries in order to limit views of contemporary off site development. Additionally, because the park includes only 60 of the original 238 acres that comprised the farm during the Weir occupation, residential development now abuts the Weir Complex to the north and west. Nonetheless, the viewsheds that inspired Weir and others are largely intact and easily identifiable, and the landscape still serves as inspiration for visitors and artists.

The condition of the Weir Complex landscape is “good.” There is no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Burlingham Complex:
Many of the historic characteristics and features at the Burlingham Complex remain today. Natural systems and features, characterized by a distinct woodland-meadow pattern overlaid on sloping terrain, are intact. The spaces and features that inspired the artistic works of J. Alden Weir, Mahonri Young, and others—the house and domestic areas facing Nod Hill Road, and the surrounding gardens and agricultural features—are present and still intact. The two most important buildings—Burlingham house (1775) and barn (1835)—have been rehabilitated for park offices and visitor and educational programming, respectively. A woodshed, potting shed, and incinerator remain, as do well structures, cold frames, and stone walls. Many of these features have also been repaired and restored. A gravel driveway and various stone paths and stone steps link many of these features together, while a stone patio is extant alongside the house. Plantings at the site include the ornamental Sunken Garden, a terraced vegetable garden, an orchard, and other trees, shrubs, and lawns. Sites and views chosen for many of the paintings executed by Weir, Young, and their contemporaries remain intact and are easily discerned on the property.

The most visible change at the Burlingham Complex since 1957 has been the recent construction of an employee and overflow parking lot west of the barn and woodshed. The area was selected due to favorable topography, an existing access route, and screening created by existing buildings, walls, and vegetation. Other changes have concerned vegetation and have been more subtle. In the 2000s, non-historic vegetation at the garden terraces and around the house foundation was removed and replaced by appropriate material based on historic photographs. Some trees and shrubs throughout the grounds have been removed due to disease or old age. Perhaps the most notable change at the Burlingham Complex is that the land is no longer farmed, which in some areas gradually allowed young trees and shrubs to grow and mature. Since the late 1990s, however, the park has attempted to redefine the boundaries between field and forest vegetation, although not always following the historic boundaries in order to limit views of contemporary off site development. The park includes only 60 of the original 238 acres that comprised the farm during the Weir occupation, but the residential development that now abuts other parts of the park has not encroached on the Burlingham Complex because of the conservation land to the south and west, known as Weir Preserve, which is managed by the Weir Farm Art Center. As a result, the viewsheds that inspired Weir and others are largely intact and easily identifiable, and the landscape still serves as inspiration for visitors and artists.

The condition of the Burlingham Complex landscape is “good.” There is no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Pond and Woodland Area:
Many of the historic characteristics and features at the Pond and Woodland Area remain today. Natural systems and features, characterized by a distinct woodland-meadow pattern overlaid on sloping terrain, are intact. The spaces and features that inspired the artistic works of J. Alden Weir, Mahonri Young, and others—the house and domestic areas facing Nod Hill Road, and the surrounding agricultural features—are present and still intact. The two most important buildings—Caretaker’s house (1860) and barn/garage (1860)—have been have been rehabilitated as housing and studio space for the park’s artist-in-residence program. A stone causeway and grinding stone remain, as do numerous stone boundary and retaining walls that have been repaired and restored. A gravel driveway still provides access to

the house and barn/garage, and an old wagon road tracks between the Truants' meadow and past the stone causeway. Heading north, earthen/grass paths and stone steps traverse through the woodlands to and around the Weir pond and its earthen and concrete dam and extant stone-lined water diversion system. Plantings in the vicinity of the house include trees, shrubs, lawn, as well as the Truants' meadow. Sites and views chosen for many of the paintings executed by Weir, Young, and their contemporaries remain intact and are easily discerned on the property.

Since 1957, new additions in the Pond and Woodland Area have included a 15-vehicle gravel parking lot for visitors south of the barn/garage, and a new set of steps and a wood footbridge along the path to the pond. Several structures have been lost, such as the boathouse, summerhouse, and the wooden Fishing Bridge, which was located along the pond path and was only fragments by the time the park was established. Some trees and shrubs throughout the grounds have been removed due to disease or old age. Perhaps the most notable change at the Pond and Woodland Area is that two of the former meadow areas, named the Triangular and Ridgetop meadows, are now overgrown due to the lack of active farming since the historic period. Invasive non-native plants are also becoming established, especially in the vicinity of the pond. Additionally, because the park includes only 60 of the original 238 acres that comprised the farm during the Weir occupation, residential development now abuts the east and west sides of the Pond and Woodland Area, except along the extreme north and west boundary that is conservation land owned by the State of Connecticut and the Town of Ridgefield. Except for Weir's "Afternoon by the Pond" painting site from the formerly open Ridgetop Meadow, the viewsheds that inspired Weir and others are largely intact and easily identifiable, and the landscape still serves as inspiration for visitors and artists.

The condition of the Pond and Woodland landscape is "good." There is no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Landscape Hierarchy Description:

Weir Farm National Historic Site consists of one landscape – Weir Farm NHS Landscape – and three component landscapes: Weir Complex, Burlingham Complex, and the Pond and Woodland Area.

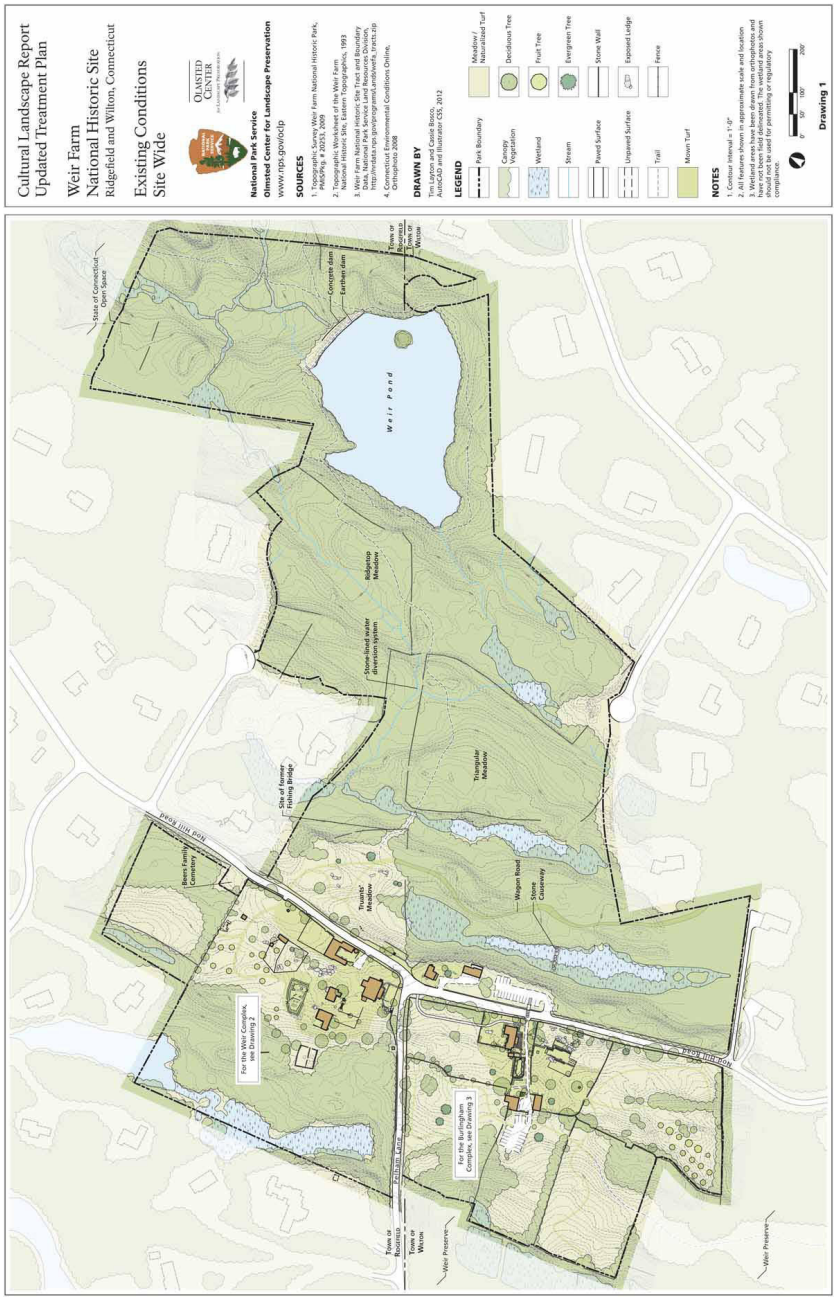
Landscape Type:

Historic Site

Other Names:

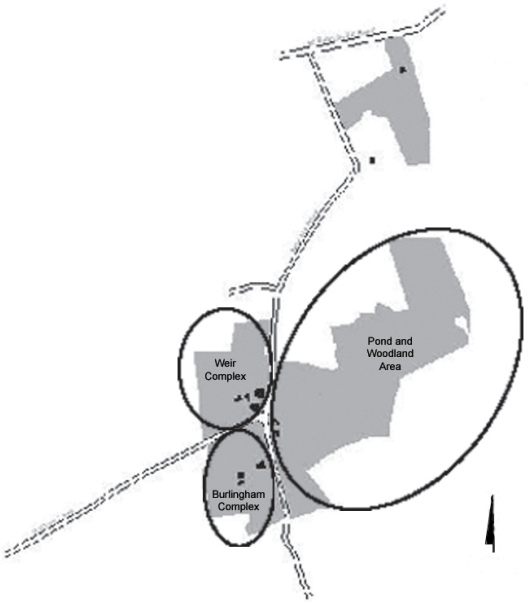
Other Name:	Beers Farm	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Webb Farm	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Weir Farm	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Weir Farm National Historic Site	**Other Name Type:**	Current

Site Plan



Overview of Weir Farm National Historic Site. For detailed maps, see the three component CLIs. (Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation--hereafter OCLP--2013)

Hierarchy Description Graphic:



Division of the Weir Farm National Histoic Site parent landscape into three component landscapes. The Westervelt-DiNapoli-Lecher property north of the three component landscapes is not historic and therefore not a component landscape. (OCLP, 2003)

Concurrence Information

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 09/23/2013

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

Cynthia Zaitvesky and Child Associates, in conjunction with the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation (OCLP), completed a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), Vol. 1, Site History and Existing Conditions, for Weir Farm National Historic Site in 1996 to inform a line item construction project at the park. The OCLP completed CLR Vol. 2, Treatment, the following year which included treatment plans and recommendations.

In 2003, the OCLP completed a Level I Cultural Landscape Inventory for Weir Farm. This inventory included all land under ownership of Weir Farm NHS at that time, including a nine-acre parcel to the north of the historic core, utilized as an administrative area. During this inventory, the park and the OCLP concluded that the administrative area, also known as the Westervelt-DiNapoli/Lecher property, was not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office concurred with this finding in June 2004. Consequently, it is not included in this inventory.

Currently in draft at OCLP is a Cultural Landscape Report, Vol. 2 Update, draft 2/27/2013, authored by historical landscape architects Tim Layton and Eliot Foulds, due for publication in 2013. This project documents treatment projects at the park completed since the release of CLR Vol. 2 and provides updated treatment recommendations. The three CLIs documenting the three component landscapes of Weir Farm NHS—Weir Complex, the Burlingham Complex, and the Pond and Woodland Area—have been compiled from existing secondary material, particularly the CLRs, by OCLP and Jim Bertolini, Student Conservation Association intern.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Attachment File Path

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

Burlingham Complex
Weir Farm National Historic Site

Weir Farm National Historic Site concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the Burlingham Complex including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Burlingham Complex is hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Weir Farm National Historic Site — Date 9/23/13

Park concurrence form (Burlingham Complex), September 23, 2013.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

Weir Complex
Weir Farm National Historic Site

Weir Farm National Historic Site concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the Weir Complex including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Weir Complex is hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Weir Farm National Historic Site — Date 9/23/13

Park concurrence form (Weir Complex), September 23, 2013.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

Pond and Woodland Area
Weir Farm National Historic Site

Weir Farm National Historic Site concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the Pond and Woodland Area including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Pond and Woodland Area is hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Weir Farm National Historic Site — Date 9/23/13

Park concurrence form (Pond and Woodland Area), September 23, 2013.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

Weir Farm NHS Landscape
Weir Farm National Historic Site

Weir Farm National Historic Site concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the Weir Farm NHS Landscape including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Weir Farm NHS Landscape is hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Weir Farm National Historic Site — Date 9/23/13

Park concurrence form (NHS Landscape), September 23, 2013.

Cultural Landscapes Inventory
CLI Updates Certification Form
2025

Weir Farm National Historic Site

Burlingham Complex, Pond and Woodland Area, Weir Complex, NHS Landscape

Weir Farm National Historic Site concurs with the updates for the following CLIs, including:

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:
Good – Burlingham Complex
Good – Pond and Woodland Area
Good – Weir Complex
Good – Weir Farm NHS Landscape

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The CLI Updates at Weir Farm National Historic Site are hereby approved and accepted.

KRISTIN LESSARD Digitally signed by KRISTIN LESSARD
Date: 2025.08.13 13:53:20 -04'00'

Superintendent, Weir Farm National Historic Site Date

Park concurrence form, August 13, 2025.

Revision:

Revised By	Type of Revision	Revision Date	Revision Narrative
Jeff Killion	CLI Update	08/13/2025	Three levels of effort have been developed for CLI Updates: A, B, and C. Level C is limited to a condition reassessment of the landscape; Level B includes C and is a targeted update of select data fields; Level A includes C and is a comprehensive update of all data fields. This 2025 update to the Weir Farm NHS Landscape has been conducted at a Level C effort. See Landscape Documents in CRIS-CL for correspondences with park.

Geographic Information

State and County:

State	County

Size (Acres): 59

Land Tract Number(s)

Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the Weir Farm NHS Landscape are comprised of the three component landscapes, described as follows:

The Weir Complex is a component landscape of Weir Farm National Historic Site (NHS), encompassing 10.09 acres of land within the boundaries of the park to the north of Pelham Lane and to the west of Nod Hill Road. It includes the 1.89-acre tract 101-02, and two parcels of tract 101-01 encompassing 8.20 acres. The southeast corner of the component landscape begins at the northwest corner of Pelham Lane and Nod Hill Road. Proceeding west, the boundary extends along Pelham Lane to the west boundary of the NHS, then extending north 750.65 feet, then east approximately 200 feet, then north approximately 200 feet, then east approximately 250 feet to Nod Hill Road. The east boundary then extends south along Nod Hill Road for approximately 200 feet before jutting westward for 50 feet, southward 50 feet, and eastward fifty feet back to Nod Hill Road, allowing for a small parcel outside the NHS that was a portion of the old Beers Farm cemetery. The east boundary continues southward approximately 500 feet to the starting point at the corner of Pelham Lane and Nod Hill Road (Weir Farm CLI, 2003, Part 1:9; NPS Landsnet deed records).

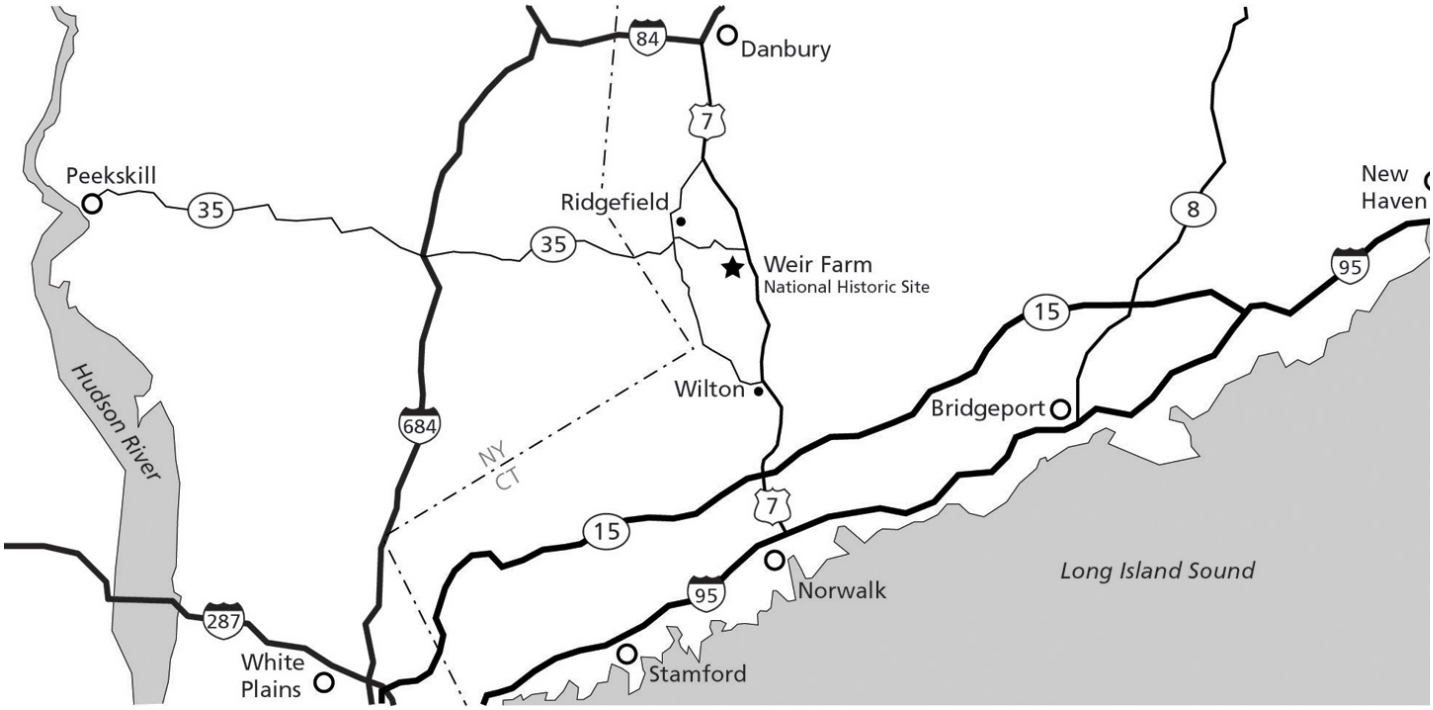
The Burlingham Complex encompasses 9.59 acres of land within the boundaries of the National Historic Site to the south of Pelham Lane and to the west of Nod Hill Road. It is comprised entirely by Tract 101-01, Parcel A. The northeast corner of the component landscape begins at the southwest corner of Pelham Lane and Nod Hill Road. Proceeding west, the boundary extends along Pelham Lane to the west boundary of the NHS. Turning south, the boundary runs south, jutting out briefly, then turning south again, running to the southwest corner of the property. From the corner, the boundary extends east, jutting south slightly, then east to Nod Hill Road. There the boundary runs along the road to the starting point at the corner of Pelham Lane and Nod Hill Road (CLI, Part 1, p9; NPS Landsnet deed records).

The Pond and Woodland Area encompasses 39.08 acres of fields and woodland. It includes tracts 101-10, 101-05, and 101-03 as well as parcels within tract 101-01. The western boundary of the component landscape abuts Nod Hill Road running roughly south-southwest. Its southern boundary extends, with some irregularity, eastward several thousand feet along the north property lines of suburban developments to encompass Weir Pond. It then extends north several hundred feet around the pond before returning to the west. The northern boundary also contains many irregularities before returning to the west boundary at Nod Hill Road.

Boundary Coordinates

Source	Type of Point	Latitude	Longitude	Narrative
	Area	41.25744	-73.456433	
	Area	41.256731	-73.458319	
	Area	41.258745	-73.458596	
	Area	41.258774	-73.457531	
	Area	41.259505	-73.457498	
	Area	41.259588	-73.456314	
	Point	41.25594	-73.456989	
	Area	41.255093	-73.455504	
	Area	41.256238	-73.45491	
	Area	41.259498	-73.450161	
	Area	41.261695	-73.451359	
	Area	41.261568	-73.452993	
	Area	41.260017	-73.452993	
	Area	41.258669	-73.456213	
	Area	41.257365	-73.456409	

Location Map:



Weir Farm National Historic Site, Wilton and Ridgefield, Connecticut. (http://www.nps.gov/wefa/planyourvisit/upload/Area%20Map%20Final.pdf)

Regional Landscape Contexts:

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 09/23/2013

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Weir Farm NHS Landscape and its three component landscapes meet the criteria for the “Must Be Preserved and Maintained” management category. The enabling legislation (P.L. 101-485, October 31, 1990) articulated the preservation of the park and directed the National Park Service and its principal partner at Weir Farm, the Weir Farm Heritage Trust, with preserving “a significant site of the tradition of American Impressionism” and maintaining the “integrity of a setting that inspired artistic expression…” Weir Farm is one of only two sites within the national park system that focus primarily on fine art (General Management Plan 1995: 1,71).

Management Agreements:

Legal Interests:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative:

Located in managed wilderness?: Unknown

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

Adjacent Lands Narrative:

National Register Information

National Register of Historic Places

Documentation Status: SHPO Documented

Documentation Narrative Description:

On January 5, 1984, approximately 194 acres of the 238-acre farm formerly owned by Julian Alden Weir was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the J. Alden Weir Farm Historic District. The documentation identified two areas of significance, art and architecture, as the home and studio of American Impressionist painter Julian Alden Weir (1852-1919). The nomination listed the overall period of significance as 1700-1911 as well as specific dates of importance for the Weir House, beginning with its construction in the eighteenth century and alterations in 1900 and 1911 by architects Charles Adams Platt and the firm of McKim, Mead & White, respectively. Specific features listed or described in the documentation included the Weir House, Weir Studio, Young Studio, Weir Barn, Chicken House, Burlingham House, Caretaker's House, and Weir Pond Dam. The nomination described the farm landscape as influencing the subject matter for Weir's landscape paintings as well as for other artists who visited and painted at the farm, but it did not identify specific features.

Public Law 101-485 established Weir Farm National Historic Site on October 31, 1990, which comprised 59.08 acres of land within the J. Alden Weir Farm Historic District. On May 17, 1996, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with the National Park Service (NPS) on the eligibility of individual park resources for listing in the National Register, as part of an update to the NPS' List of Classified Structures (LCS). Additional resources determined eligible for listing included the Weir Complex-Tack House and Stone Walls (various types); Burlingham Barn; Burlingham Complex-Stone Shed, Wood Shed, Garden Wall and Urn, Stone Walls (various types), and Vegetable Garden Retaining Walls; Caretaker's Barn/Garage; and Pond Side-Stone Walls (various types). The park's acreage increased in 2000 with the purchase of the 8.97-acre Westervelt-DiNapoli/Lecher property. On September 9, 2004, the Connecticut SHPO concurred with the NPS that this parcel was not historically significant.

On June 10, 2013, the Connecticut SHPO approved a list of contributing and noncontributing resources for the park, as part of their review of draft update to the park's National Register documentation. In addition to its national significance for Weir, the draft nomination found significance in the area of art, as the home and studio of American sculptor Mahonri Young (1877-1957). The documentation identified areas of significance as art, architecture, landscape architecture, archeology (prehistoric), and archeology (historic – non-aboriginal). The document listed periods of significance as 1760-1882, 1882-1957, and 2000-1200 BP. Specific dates of importance were 1760-1778 (construction of the Weir House), 1882 (Weir's purchase of the Beers farm), 1907 (Weir's purchase of the Burlingham property), 1919 (Weir's death), and 1957 (Young's death). In addition to the resources identified in the previous documentation and consultation efforts, other contributing resources were identified, including the Garden Tool Shed, Chicken Coop, Corn Crib, Secret Garden, Orchard, numerous archeology sites, as well as several non-contributing features.

According to research conducted for this CLI and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the "CLI Professional Procedures Guide," the areas and periods of significance for the Weir Farm NHS has been adequately documented in the National Register and through previous consultations with the Connecticut SHPO, which describe the site's numerous historic resources that contribute to its significance. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, the Weir Farm NHS landscape and its component landscapes are considered "SHPO-Documented."

Eligibility: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Concurrence Eligibility Date: 06/10/2013

Concurrence Narrative:

The Connecticut SHPO approved the list of contributing and noncontributing resources in the park, as part of their review of the draft update to the park's National Register documentation.

Significance Level: National

Contributing: Individual

Classification: District

Statement of Significance for National Register of Historic Places:

As stated in the park's April 2013 draft National Register documentation, Weir Farm National Historic Site (NHS) is significant under criteria A, B, C, and D. The park has national significance in the area of art as the home and workplace of American painter Julian Alden Weir from 1882 to 1919, as well as for American sculptor and Weir's son-in-law, Mahonri M. Young from 1931 to 1957. The property is also nationally significant for its contributions to the American Impressionist art movement and as a retreat not just for Weir but for famed Impressionists including Childe Hassam, John Twatchmen, and other members of the Ten American Painters, or "The Ten." The park is locally significant in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture for its overall setting as expressed in the buildings, landscape, and features assembled on the site. Weir was drawn to this location by the beauty of the existing farms, and went to great lengths to preserve the rural setting and farm the land. The park also exhibits national significance in the area of archeology for the proven ability of numerous archeological sites to yield information important to the interpretation and understanding of the lives, families, and works of Julian Alden Weir, Mahonri Young, and other artists inspired by the beauty of this landscape.

The primary periods of significance for the Weir Farm NHS are from 1760-1882 and 1882-1957. The first historic period begins with the initial construction dates of the Weir house and continues through the occupation of the Beers and Webb families. The second historic period begins when Weir assumed ownership of the property, continuing through the years when Young owned and lived at the property and when the property was used as an artists' retreat, and ends with the death of Young. A third period of significance, 2000-1200 B.P., acknowledges archeological resources, which are beyond the scope of this CLI and are therefore not addressed beyond information provided in National Register documentation. The archeological period of significance is for the pre-contact archeological component, defined by the recovery of a Woodland period projectile point and understanding of regional settlement patterns.

The following text expands on the park's significance, and where applicable, briefly discusses specific resources at the three component landscapes that contribute to the park's overall significance. For additional detail, refer to Section 8 in the park's April 2013 draft National Register documentation.

CRITERION A

Weir Farm NHS is nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of art for the development of American Impressionism and The Ten American Painters, or "The Ten." The property served as a venue for expression, practice, socialization, and collaboration for Weir and his contemporaries. The beauty of his farm and its rural landscape encouraged Weir and other artists to explore and ultimately embrace American Impressionism. Due in part to Julian Alden Weir's ability to foster relationships with other artists, the American Impressionist movement gained success and legitimacy in the United States. By providing an environment for Weir and his contemporaries to gather and discuss ideas, trends, and theories, the site was critical in the founding of The Ten (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 26).

CRITERION B

Weir Farm NHS is nationally significant under Criterion B as the country home and workplace of American Impressionist painter Julian Alden Weir during the greater part of his career. The property is evidence of Weir's affinity for the rural farm landscape depicted in many of his most noted paintings. Weir Farm is the only place where the domestic and creative milieus of a prominent nineteenth-century artist remain intact, including the home, studios, and significant portion of the landscape that were integral to the artist's vision (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 26).

Julian Alden Weir (1852–1919) was born in West Point, and educated in New York City and in Paris. Around 450 of Weir's paintings are in collections across the country and he is represented in the holdings of nearly every major American museum, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; the Phillips Collection and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C.; Brigham Young University's Museum of Art in Provo, Utah; and the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford, Connecticut (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 27).

The park is also significant as the home and studio of American sculptor Mahonri Young from 1931 until his death in 1957. Mahonri Mackintosh Young (1877-1957) was born outside of Salt Lake City and studied in New York and in Paris, and was the son-in-law of Julian Alden Weir. In 1939, he began work on his "This Is the Place" sculpture, which commemorates the arrival of Mormon pioneers in Salt Lake Valley. Young's studio at the farm afforded him all that he needed to create the massive composition. The farm also provided the tranquility and energy necessary for Young to complete the piece successfully (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 28).

There are thirty documented painting subject locations within the park that correspond to paintings by J. Alden Weir and his associates. Eighteen of the locations are in the Weir Complex, six are in the Burlingham Complex, and six are in the Pond and Woodland Area.

CRITERION C

Weir Farm NHS is locally significant under Criterion C in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture as an intact collection of domestic and agricultural buildings and landscapes that exemplify significant agricultural and rural landscape features, and designed gardens. Weir and his brother John took on operation of the farm as fundamental to their residence on the property. While their background had not prepared them for a role as farmers, they recognized the value of the land's practical use and sought to continue what the previous owners had begun. Just as social class and upbringing led the women of the family to rely on hired help for everyday work in the household, John and Julian Weir were content to hire reliable and competent tenants to farm the land. In this way, the farm ran efficiently and productively without placing the burden of labor upon the landowners, allowing Julian to teach, paint, and travel. The farm became a model of efficiency and balance, with equal attention given to creativity and to toil. Outbuildings, grazing meadows, and crops were cared for and well maintained. The collection of barns, animal pens, and stone pastures stand as evidence of the lifestyle Weir sought to craft for himself and his family at Branchville (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 26).

Weir Complex:
There are multiple examples of late eighteenth century through early twentieth century architectural types and styles within the Weir Complex. The Weir house (1760-1778, 1830) represents the Greek Revival style, while the Weir studio (1885-1886) and Young studio (1932) represent different architectural styles, with Young selecting a considerably more modern style than Weir's earlier building. Various outbuildings, such as the barn (1815-1835), chicken house (1891), tack house (pre-1911), and chicken coop (1932), were constructed over the course of the site's history and reflect a range of rural architectural styles and trends. Landscape features also strongly define the property's rural agricultural character and contribute to its significance as a whole. Stone walls, stone steps, picket fences, gates, gravel driveways, and stone paths serve to enhance circulation throughout the site while reflecting both utilitarian and more decorative uses. Designed landscapes on the property, including the Secret Garden as well as the upper and lower garden terrace, stone benches, and a stone table express the aesthetic interests of the Weirs and Youngs. Ornamental plantings and the orchard further enhance the appearance of the site and contribute to its rural appeal (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 37).

Burlingham Complex:
There are multiple examples of late eighteenth century through early twentieth century architectural types and styles within the Burlingham Complex. The Burlingham house (1775, 1931-1938) represents a Colonial Revival style, while various outbuildings like the woodshed (1750), barn (1835), and potting shed (1931) were constructed over the course of the site's history and reflect a range of rural architectural styles and trends. Landscape features also strongly define the property's rural agricultural character and contribute to its significance as a whole. Stone walls, gravel driveways, stone terraces, and stone paths serve to enhance circulation throughout the site while reflecting both utilitarian and more decorative uses. Designed landscapes on the property include the Sunken Garden and the terraced garden, which express the aesthetic interests of the Burlinghams. Ornamental plantings and an orchard further enhance the appearance of the site and contribute to its rural appeal (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 35-37).

Pond and Woodland Area:
The Caretaker's house (1860) and the barn/garage (1860) are an example of eighteenth and early-nineteenth century vernacular architecture in Connecticut. Landscape features also strongly define the property's rural agricultural character and contribute to its significance as a whole. Stone walls, stone steps, picket fences, gravel driveways, and paths serve to enhance circulation throughout the site while reflecting both utilitarian and more decorative uses. Designed landscapes on the property include the Weir pond, earthen and concrete dams, and a stone lined water diversion system, which express Weir's aesthetic interests. Ornamental plantings and an open meadow further enhance the appearance of the site and contribute to its rural appeal (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 37-38).

CRITERION D

Weir Farm NHS is nationally significant under Criterion D in the area of archeology for the periods of the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century in the themes of eighteenth-century rural farming in western Connecticut and the development of the domestic and artistic landscape of Julian Alden Weir, Mahonri Young, and the Weir family. These themes are expressed through a series of significant archeological sites demonstrating a high degree of integrity and the ability to convey the significance of the property through documented information potential. Additionally, state level significance is met for the time period of circa 2000 to 1200 years before present (B.P.), during the pre-contact Native American Woodland period. The theme through which the pre-contact archeological sites within the Weir Farm convey their significance is the study of pre-contact Native American extraction of quartz lithic material in western Connecticut and the Hudson Valley. The pre-contact archeological sites within the park represent a range of types and functions; however, they all appear to relate to the extraction and reduction of quartz lithic material. Most importantly, the presence of a quartz-bearing geologic formation and outcrops with an associated primary reduction site in the Pond Area of the Weir farm anchors the pre-contact land-use pattern to a central source. The creation of this significant example of an archeological landscape was possible only through the incorporation of Weir Farm's unique geologic setting and natural history with regional Native American cultural history and technologies (National Register, draft 2012, Sec.8: 26).

There are seven archeological sites in the Weir Complex landscape and two archeological sites in the Burlingham Complex landscape that are significant under Criterion D for potential to yield information not only about the lives of the Weirs and Youngs while staying at the farm, but also about rural life in western Connecticut in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (National Register 2012, Sec. 8:38-42). There is one archeological site in the Pond and Woodland Area that is significant under Criterion D for information potential regarding Archaic period settlement in western Connecticut and eastern New York pre-contact (National Register 2012, Sec. 8:48-50).

National Register Significance Criteria:

B - Associated with lives of persons significant in our past

C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

D - Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

National Register Criteria Consideration:

National Register Periods of Significance (with Historic Context Themes):

Time Period: CE 1760 - CE 1882

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Creating Social Institutions and Movements	Ways of Life	Farming Communities	
Expressing Cultural Values	Architecture	Vernacular Architecture	
Peopling Places	Colonial Exploration and Settlement	English Exploration And Settlement	

Time Period: CE 1882 - CE 1957

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Expressing Cultural Values	Architecture	Period Revival	
Expressing Cultural Values	Painting and Sculpture	American Impressionism 1876-1920	

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Art

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Architecture

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Archeology

Area of Significance Subcategory: Historic-Non-Aboriginal

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Archeology

Area of Significance Subcategory: Prehistoric

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Landscape Architecture

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

NRIS Information:

NRIS Name:	Weir, J. Alden, Farm National Historic Site
NRIS ID:	84000825
Primary Certification Date:	01/05/1984

State Register Documentation:

National Historic Landmarks:

National Historic Landmark? No

Theme:

Contributing:

NHL ID:

NHL URL:

Date:

Statement of Significance for National Historic Landmark:

World Heritage Site:

World Heritage Site? No

Category:

WHS ID:

WHS URL:

Date:

Is Resource within a designated National Natural Landscape: No

Chronology and Physical History

Chronology:

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1760 - 1882	Developed	For a comprehensive chronology, see the CLIs for the four component landscapes of the carriage road system. The first historic period begins with the initial construction dates of the Weir house and continues through the occupation of the Beers and Webb families.
CE 1882 - 1957	Developed	The second historic period begins when Weir assumed ownership of the property, continuing through the years when Young owned and lived at the property and when the property was used as an artists' retreat, and ends with the death of Young.

Physical History:

For a comprehensive physical history, see the CLIs for the three component landscapes of Weir Farm NHS.

Uses

Functions and Uses:

Major Category	Category	Use/Function	Historic	Current	Primary
Education	Interpretive Landscape	Interpretive Landscape	No	Yes	Yes
Domestic (Residential)	Small Residential Landscape	Small Residential Landscape	Yes	No	Yes

Public Access:

Public Access: Other Restrictions

Public Access Narrative:

The historic Weir House, Weir Studio, and Young Studio are currently undergoing restoration and are closed to the public. From April through November, the Burlingham House Visitor Center is open Thursday through Sunday, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. From December through March, it is open Saturday and Sunday, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All public buildings are closed in observance of the following federal holidays: New Year's Day (January 1), Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day (December 25). The grounds are open every day from dawn to dusk.

Public Access: With Permission

Public Access Narrative:

The 4.09-acre area within the core of the Weir Farm and the 8.97-acre Westervelt-DiNapoli/Lecher property are accessible with permission.

Associated Ethnographic Group

Ethnographic Study Status: No Survey Conducted

Ethnographic Narrative:

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Overall, Weir Farm NHS and its three component landscapes retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association for the 1760-1882 and 1882-1957 periods of significance.

Location:
All of the land, buildings, structures, circulation features, and painting sites within the park boundaries were historically part of the property in 1957. The park is approximately 60 acres in size, compared to the 238-acre property owned during the period of significance. However, portions of the park are surrounded by land owned by the State of Connecticut, the private and non-profit Weir Farm Art Center, and open space set aside by the town of Ridgefield, so that the integrity of the viewsheds is maintained.

Design:
The design of the buildings and landscape features, including circulation patterns and building relationships that existed in 1957, remain intact. Changes that have occurred include rehabilitation of outbuildings and replacement of parking lot and pathway materials. The overall design of the Weir Farm—including its individual component parts retains integrity of design. The park's restoration and rehabilitation efforts have focused on stabilizing, residing, and re-roofing buildings such as the Weir house, both the Weir and Young studios, the ice house/chicken house, and Weir barn. Garden spaces, fences, and stone walls have also been restored or repaired.

Materials:
The materials of the buildings, outbuildings, driveways, paths, fences, walls, and other resources are largely original or have been repaired or replaced in kind according to "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties." Vegetation is original or is similar to what existed historically, in size, organization, and visual effect, although a few trees, shrubs, and vegetable plantings have been lost or removed. The historic fences and stone walls have largely been replaced in-kind or repaired with extant materials.

Workmanship:
The houses and outbuildings retain the construction materials and workmanship that existed during the period of significance. Craftsmanship of the outbuildings is retained through careful rehabilitation projects. The stone walls throughout the site provide valuable examples of historic workmanship. Recent restoration projects within the park to repair these stone walls have largely been completed using compatible techniques and using extant materials. Painting sites retain the rural quality that made them attractive to Weir, Young, and their fellow artists.

Setting:
While much of the 238-acre Weir Farm has been sold, the 60 acres managed by the National Park Service retains its original setting. Single-family residential development associated with the towns of Wilton and Ridgefield abut some of the park boundaries, but most of the houses are surrounded by woods that lessen the visual impact. Other adjacent lands are owned by the State of Connecticut, the Weir Farm Art Center, and the town of Ridgefield, which allow for the farmstead setting and several painting sites to be retained. The alignments of the property by Pelham Lane and Nod Hill Road, and the former domestic areas, pastures, and woodlots are basically intact.

Feeling:
The sense of the past time and place of the peaceful farm where J. Alden Weir, Mahonri Young, and their families and friends lived, worked, painted, and socialized is certainly evident at the park today. Historic landscape features, painting sites, and buildings and structures are extant and reinforce the integrity of feeling.

Association:
Continued occupation and use of the property has helped retain the link between the property and the artists who owned it. While the Weir Farm property now functions as a national historic site, it is still used by artists for its landscapes and remains a vital source of inspiration for paintings and artwork. The park has an artist-in-residence program and other art curriculums that perpetuate the artistic traditions of the site.

Landscape Characteristic:

For a comprehensive analysis of landscape characteristics and features, see the CLIs for the three component landscapes of Weir Farm NHS.

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 1

Next Assessment Due Date: 08/13/2026

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 08/13/2025

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

As the three component landscapes of this parent landscape are in good condition, this parent landscape is in good condition.

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 09/25/2023

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Provisional. The condition reassessment for this CLI has been delayed due to the effects of Covid-19 travel restrictions and staffing shortages. In the meantime, the most recent condition assessment will remain in place until it is reassessed. Planning and scheduling for this update will occur in FYs 2023-2024.

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 09/23/2013

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The condition of the Weir Farm NHS Landscape and its three component landscapes is “good.” There is no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Treatment

Stabilization Measures

Treatment Documents

Treatment Type:	Rehabilitation
Treatment Completed:	Yes
Document Type:	General Management Plan
Document Date:	1995-01-01
Title:	
IRMA Link:	

Narrative:

The National Park Service completed a General Management Plan (GMP) in February 1995 to serve as the comprehensive document to guide planning and management at Weir Farm. The “Cultural Landscape Report, Volume 2: Treatment,” is currently in draft (2013).

For the Weir Complex, the General Management Plan clearly stipulates that the landscape will be restored to its appearance in about 1940 to reflect the continu¬ous use of the site while conveying the historic character of the landscape that pre¬vailed though both the Weir and Young periods. The treatment philosophy aims to restore missing features and enhance historic character so that the Weir Complex landscape more closely reflects circa 1940 conditions. Visitors will tour the restored buildings and grounds and understand how the agricultural outbuildings supported the farming activities of the families. Plantings consistent with the historic period will thrive in the upper vegetable garden terrace, around the foundation of the home, in the Secret Garden and in the orchard. Small-scale features added during Weir’s tenure for their rustic quality or associated with agricultural pursuits, will furnish the domestic and agricultural areas (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, draft 2/27/2013: 62; CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012: 51).

For the Burlingham Complex, the GMP stipulates that the landscape will be rehabilitated rather than restored so that the changes Cora Weir Burlingham made after 1940 are retained. The treatment philosophy aims to retain the post-1940 landscape changes directed by Cora Weir Burlingham concluding with the replanting of the Sunken Garden in 1969. The landscape will be rehabilitated to facilitate visitor services, with visitor orientation presented in and surrounding the Burlingham House. The park’s educational programs will be supported in the Burlingham Barn. Staff will park in a small, gravel-surfaced parking area accessed from the Burlingham drive and screened from view by existing buildings, stone walls, and vegetation. Plantings consistent with the historic period will thrive around the foundation of the Burlingham House, in the Sunken Garden, in the South Garden terraces, and in the orchard. Small-scale features in the Sunken Garden and South Garden terraces will convey Cora Weir Burlingham’s interest in gardening (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012: 51; CLR, Vol. 2 Update, draft 2/27/2013: 62).

In the Pond and Woodland Area, the GMP stipulates that the cultural landscape will be rehabilitated to enhance character from circa 1940. The treatment philosophy aims to restore missing features and enhance historic character so that the Pond and Woodland Area landscape more closely reflects circa 1940 conditions. The Caretaker’s House and rehabilitated garage will support the park’s artist-in-residence program. A clearly defined pedestrian circulation system will connect the Pond and Woodland Area to the Weir and Burlingham complexes. Pedestrians will pass through a series of open meadows and wooded areas en route to Weir Pond. The pond’s water level and the two dams will be maintained to blend into the woodland setting and not stand out as highly engineered features. Contemporary off-site views will be screened to the extent that is practical with appropriate plantings on the park property (CLR, Vol. 2 Update, Draft, 8/31/2012: 51; CLR, Vol. 2 Update, draft 2/27/2013: 62).

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

Treatment Type:	See CLR
Treatment Completed:	No
Document Type:	Cultural Landscape Report
Document Date:	1997-01-01
Title:	Cultural Landscape Report for Weir Farm National Historic Site, Vol. 2: Analysis and Treatment
IRMA Link:	https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2293821

Narrative:

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

Treatment Type:	See CLR
Treatment Completed:	No
Document Type:	Cultural Landscape Report
Document Date:	2013-01-01
Title:	Cultural Landscape Report for Weir Farm National Historic Site, Volume II: Updated Treatment Plan and Record of Treatment
IRMA Link:	https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2203945
Narrative:	

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

Treatment Type:	See CLR
Treatment Completed:	No
Document Type:	Cultural Landscape Report
Document Date:	1996-01-01
Title:	Cultural Landscape Report for Weir Farm National Historic Site, Volume 1: Site History and Existing Conditions
IRMA Link:	https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2188099
Narrative:	

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography:

Citation Author	Citation Title	Year of Publication	Citation Publisher	Citation Type	Citation Location	Citation Number
See below.	For a full bibliography, see the CLIs for the three component landscapes of Weir Farm NHS.					

Landscape Documents:

File Name	Date	Attachment Type
WEFA_Weir Complex-Burlingham-Pond & Woodland-NHS_CLI Updates Notes_2025.pdf		

Source