

Section I of the Periodic Report on the Application of the World Heritage Convention:

Application of the World Heritage Convention by the United States of America

December 2004



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SECTION I: APPLICATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I.1 Introduction

a. State Party

United States of America

b. Year of ratification or acceptance of the Convention

December 7, 1973

c. Organization responsible for the preparation of the report

U.S. National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

d. Date of the report

2004

e. Signature on behalf of the State Party

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The United States operates under a federal system of government with fifty states and several territories, each with its own government. Municipal and other local governments are chartered by the States. There are also federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments which enjoy a measure of sovereignty and with which the Federal government maintains a “government-to-government” relationship. Responsibility for specific heritage sites and their management may be shared by several levels of these governments. This report reflects the large number of entities with authority on heritage matters.

I.2 Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties

a. National inventories

The list of United States World Heritage properties is maintained by the Office of International Affairs of the National Park Service (NPS). A brief description of each property and its date of inscription can be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/worldheritage/list2.htm>. The NPS also has published the list of US World Heritage Sites and general information about the World Heritage Convention in a printed brochure, *US World Heritage Sites*.

In addition to World Heritage Sites, the units of the National Park System (388 in total) designated by the US Congress and managed by NPS (including natural and/or cultural sites), constitute another inventory of nationally significant sites maintained by the NPS. The index of NPS units, which is regularly updated as new units are added, is found on the National Park Service web site.

Besides maintaining the US World Heritage Site list and the index of its own units, NPS also maintains several other national inventories:

National Historic Landmarks

National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) are nationally significant historic places, in public and private ownership, that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Fewer than 2,500 historic places bear this national distinction. Working with citizens throughout the nation, NPS nominates new landmarks and provides assistance to existing landmarks. Further information on National Historic Landmarks program is available on the Internet at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/INDEX.htm>

National Natural Landmarks

The National Natural Landmarks (NNL) Program recognizes and encourages the conservation of nationally outstanding examples of natural history. It is the only US natural areas program of national scope that identifies and recognizes the best examples of biological and geological features in both public and private ownership. To date, fewer than 600 sites have been designated. If requested, the National Park Service assists NNL owners and managers with the conservation of these important sites.

National Register of Historic Places

While the lists of National Historic and Natural Landmarks only include sites of national significance, the National Register of Historic Places, also maintained by the National Park Service, is a broader list.

The National Register of Historic Places (<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/>) is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The Register, which is continually expanded, now includes more than 50,000 properties of local, state, and national significance.

There are many other national inventories of significant natural resources, some maintained by the NPS as part of national designation programs or for other purposes. These include the Nationwide Rivers Inventory, and the list of designated Wild & Scenic Rivers. Other agencies of the Federal government maintain their own national inventories. For example, the National Oceans Service maintains a national inventory of marine managed areas including National Marine Sanctuaries and National Estuarine Research Reserves, while the Bureau of Land Management maintains a list of Outstanding Natural Areas within its jurisdiction.

b. Tentative List

The current United States tentative list (formally known as the Indicative Inventory of Potential Future US World Heritage Nominations) is available at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/worldheritage/list1.htm> The Indicative Inventory, consisting of 50 properties, was compiled following a lengthy consultation process involving experts and the public in the 1982. According to the US system, as delineated in the Federal regulations for the US World Heritage program, any agency, organization, or individual may recommend additional properties, with accompanying documentation, for inclusion on the Indicative Inventory. The Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, in cooperation with a Federal Interagency Panel and other sources as appropriate, decides whether to include a recommended property in the Inventory. If a property is included, the National Park Service publishes the notice of its inclusion in the Federal Register, the official daily federal publication of government announcements. The Indicative Inventory was most recently expanded with the addition of Frank Lloyd Wright's Arizona home-studio-school, Taliesin West, in 1990. Generally, properties have not been added to the Indicative Inventory unless the property meets all the requirements for nomination and there is active interest from the property owner(s) and others in pursuing a nomination.

c. Nominations

The United States has nominated 20 properties that have been accepted for inscription by the World Heritage Committee. The list of designated World Heritage Sites in the United States includes 18 units of the National Park System, administered directly by the National Park Service. The three non-NPS sites include Pueblo de Taos, owned and managed by the Tribal government; Monticello—the University of Virginia, owned and managed by the private, Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the State of Virginia, respectively; and Cahokia Mounds, owned and managed by the State of Illinois as a state historic site. (La Fortaleza, the residence of Puerto Rico's Governor, nominated in conjunction with San Juan National Historic Site, is owned by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.)

The twenty sites with their year of inscription follow:

Year	Site	Criteria
1978	Yellowstone	N(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)
1978	Mesa Verde	C(iii)
1979	Grand Canyon National Park	N(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)
1979	Everglades National Park	N(i)(ii)(iv)
1979	Independence Hall	C(vi)
1979	Wrangell-St. Elias (in conjunction w/ Kluane, Canada) (extended in 1992 with addition of Glacier Bay)	N(ii)(iii)(iv) N(ii)
1980	Redwood National Park	N(ii)(iii)
1981	Mammoth Cave National Park	N(i)(iii)(iv)
1981	Olympic National Park	N(ii)(iii)
1982	Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site	C(iii)(iv)

1983	La Fortaleza—San Juan Historic Site	C(vi)
1983	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	N(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)
1984	Yosemite National Park	N(i)(ii)(iii)
1985	Statue of Liberty	C(i)(vi)
1987	Chaco Culture National Historical Park	C(iii)
1987	Hawaii Volcanoes National Park	N(ii)
1987	Monticello—University of Virginia	C(i)(iv)(vi)
1992	Pueblo de Taos	C(iv)
1995	Glacier National Park (in conjunction w/ Waterton, Canada)	N(ii)(iii)
1995	Carlsbad Caverns National Park	N(i)(iii)

Further information on the inscribed sites is available at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/worldheritage/list2.htm>.

Several US nominations have been deferred, referred back to the US, or rejected by the Committee. In 1980, the Committee decided not to inscribe Edison National Historic Site, based on a negative recommendation by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) (4th Session of the Committee). In 1981, the US Delegation to the Bureau meeting of the World Heritage Committee withdrew a proposed nomination for the Wright Brothers National Memorial, in response to a negative finding by ICOMOS. In 1987, the US nomination of Pu’uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park was deferred by the Committee, pending a detailed regional study of Pacific heritage sites that would allow a more considered comparative assessment of the property. In 1991, the Bureau of the Committee deferred consideration of the Frank Lloyd Wright properties, Taliesin and Taliesin West, nominated by the US “pending the results of a topic-by-topic study of contemporary architecture.” (Bureau 15th Session). In 1995, the Bureau, following the recommendation of ICOMOS, referred the nomination of the city plan of Savannah, Georgia back to the US indicating that the nomination could only be listed if the entire urban fabric of the historic town were included, not just the streets and open spaces that constituted the city plan (Bureau, 19th Session). Given the US requirement that 100 percent of the private property owners concur in a nomination of their property to the World Heritage List, no further effort was made to pursue the inscription of Savannah.

Nomination process

Before a property in the United States can be considered for nomination to the World Heritage List, it must satisfy the following requirements established by law (National Historic Preservation Act, as amended) and regulation (36 Code of Federal Regulations Chapter 1, Part 73). In addition, it must appear to meet at least one of the World Heritage criteria:

- the property must be nationally significant (designated by Congress as such, or listed as a National Historic Landmark or National Natural Landmark, or proclaimed a National Monument by the President)
- the property’s owner, or owners, must concur (in writing) to the nomination, and

- the property must currently be legally protected to ensure its preservation in the United States (as subsequent inscription in the World Heritage List does not confer any additional direct legal protection for the property under US law). Private owners of sites to be nominated must pledge in writing to preserve their property in perpetuity.

In the US, nominations can be processed throughout the year independent of the World Heritage Committee's nomination submission deadline. When approved by the US authorities, the US requests that the Committee consider the nomination in the next available review cycle. The US nomination process follows these steps:

1. The National Park Service publishes a notice in the Federal Register that describes the procedures and the schedule for consideration of proposed new nominations by the Assistant Secretary (including additions to the Indicative List). A comment period with a deadline for submissions is part of the notice.
2. Comments and suggestions are compiled and the Assistant Secretary, in conjunction with the Federal Interagency Panel for World Heritage, decides whether to add any properties to the Indicative List and whether to identify any properties as proposed US nominations. Among the factors that have been considered in making the decision are how well the particular type of property (theme or region) is represented on the World Heritage List; the balance of cultural and natural US properties already on the list; opportunities for public visitation and interpretation of the property; and threats to the property's integrity or state of preservation.
3. A second notice in the Federal Register announces the Assistant Secretary's intent to proceed with proposed US nominations or additions to the Indicative List. The property owner and others are notified in writing.
4. Property owners and proponents of inscribing the property prepare a nomination draft under the coordination of the National Park Service.
5. The draft nomination document is reviewed and evaluated by the Federal Interagency Panel and others as appropriate.
6. If the draft nomination is approved, it is transmitted to the World Heritage Committee through the US State Department.
7. A third Federal Register notice announcing the World Heritage nomination is published.

Motivation, obstacles and difficulties encountered in the process

The motivation for nominating properties to the World Heritage list is to achieve international recognition of the outstanding universal value of the sites. International recognition brings attention to the importance of preserving the site among a broad segment of society. Although the US regularly submitted nominations for a period of almost 20 years starting in 1978, for a variety of reasons the US has not put forward any proposed nominations since 1995. Given US legislative requirements that proposed sites be recognized as nationally significant before being considered for World Heritage listing, the pool of eligible sites already enjoys a significant amount of recognition and visibility; in some cases, the added recognition a site would receive

by inclusion in the World Heritage list is viewed as outweighed by the length, rigor, and uncertainty of the nomination process.

A major reason the US has not actively encouraged nominations in recent years is because of its commitment to the principles of a balanced World Heritage List. It has been the US Government's belief that the US, with numerous sites already designated, should refrain from submitting new nominations that might "compete" for the Committee's attention with those submitted by other States Parties which may have no sites yet inscribed on the List.

A challenge to listing US sites under multiple ownership is presented by the US requirement in federal law that all the property owners support the nomination and pledge in writing that they will preserve their property in perpetuity. For this reason, in practical terms, it has never been possible under current law for the US to nominate historic districts with numerous owners, such as the core of the city of Savannah, Georgia.

Another challenge to the nomination of US sites to the World Heritage List resulted from the Committee's 1995 decision, with the concurrence of the US Government, to inscribe Yellowstone National Park on The List of World Heritage in Danger. The controversy surrounding the inscription of Yellowstone on the World Heritage in Danger List caused significant erosion in the support for the World Heritage program among some local populations and the US Congress. The Danger listing led to perceptions in some quarters that US participation in the World Heritage Convention had opened the door to a loss of sovereignty over our national parks and "UN interference or control" over US territory.

An example of the consequences of the Yellowstone Danger listing is provided by Carlsbad Caverns National Park which was inscribed by the Committee in 1995. Following the inscription of Carlsbad Caverns, concerns were raised among local farmers, ranchers, and oil and gas industry representatives who feared the establishment of a UNESCO-mandated buffer zone around the park. Similar concerns soon prompted the introduction of proposed legislation in several sessions of Congress that would have required a separate Act of Congress before a nomination could be submitted to the Committee. The proposed bill would also have required the Department of the Interior to determine that the designation of a new site would not adversely affect private property within ten miles of the site. In the absence of any new US nominations the controversy regarding World Heritage has diminished; however, negative perceptions regarding World Heritage have lingered in some regions of the country and continue to surface from time to time.

Benefits of listing

Perceived benefits of World Heritage listing include:

- increased recognition by different levels of government and the private sector of the international importance of the property,
- ability to leverage greater public and private investment in the sites,
- increased attention and concern by the public and by non-governmental organizations to management of the site,
- indirect protection of outstanding values from degradation or loss, though World Heritage status confers no additional direct protections under US law.

Achievement of World Heritage status has benefited US sites in several ways. Among these, of course, is the increased international recognition the sites have received as a consequence of inscription in the List. The Illinois state historic site, Cahokia Mounds, reported an increase in international visitation following inscription on the World Heritage List. In several instances, the World Heritage designation of individual parks and non-federal properties has been a useful tool for site managers to highlight the importance of the site's resources and why they should be preserved. For example, at Taos Pueblo, the Tribal government challenged a proposed expansion of the local airport in 1994 on the basis that it would harm the universal value for which the Pueblo was designated a World Heritage site. During the same year, at Redwood National Park, the California Department of Transportation redesigned a road project to avoid destroying a large number of the park's redwood trees after being reminded of the site's World Heritage designation. The site manager at Cahokia Mounds attributed the willingness of the state government to grant funding for a new visitor center and new land purchases in the mid-1980s to the World Heritage designation of the site.

World Heritage designation has also resulted in increased cooperation with Canada at sites that are jointly listed. For example, at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, two parks that are listed jointly with Canadian parks across the border, World Heritage designation has resulted in direct cooperation with Canada on mountain rescue, managing traffic, and rescue operations on the Alsek River. In 1993, the World Heritage Committee supported the United States in protecting Glacier Bay National Park, by publicizing US concerns about an open pit Canadian mine near the Bay and reminding the Canadian government of its obligations under the Convention to protect the site.

The benefits of World Heritage Listing continue to attract interest in the program from around the country. The National Park Service's Office of International Affairs responds regularly to inquiries about the US process for nominating sites to the World Heritage List. At present, one effort has received US Government support through the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), an independent federal agency that provides financial assistance for the arts. In 2003, the NEA awarded the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy of Chicago, Illinois \$20,000 to support the nomination of Frank Lloyd Wright structures to the World Heritage List. The Conservancy is in the process of selecting the best and most representative examples of Wright's work and meeting with owners of this select group of Wright buildings to determine their interest and willingness to participate in the endeavor.

1.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage.

As previously stated, responsibility for recognizing, conserving, and presenting cultural and natural heritage in the United States is widely dispersed among various levels of government (Federal, State, local, Tribal) as well as the private sector (non-profit organizations and other private groups). The National Park Service manages the National Park System which is made up of several different kinds of units, including historic and cultural sites, recreational areas, and nature preserves. The National Park Service also coordinates the national historic preservation program which maintains lists of cultural heritage resources, establishes national preservation

standards, and supports State, Tribal, and local preservation programs. Other federal land managing agencies, such as the US Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, are also responsible for stewardship of significant cultural and natural heritage resources. Local governments maintain their own designation and stewardship programs. Within the private sector, a leader in cultural heritage preservation is the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which in addition to maintaining its own network of historic sites, provides assistance and support to a myriad of State and local preservation groups. In the natural heritage area, organizations such as the Nature Conservancy maintain a network of private nature preserves, while the Trust for Public Land is active in acquiring parkland for public agencies. National and local non-governmental organizations also take an active interest in how public lands are managed and engage in dialogue with government at all levels over specific aspects of the policies which govern the management of these areas.

a. General policy development

The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) provides the policy framework for cultural heritage preservation in the United States. It established the National Register of Historic Places, and greatly expanded the Federal government's role in historic preservation. Two precursors to the NHPA were the Antiquities Act of 1906 which allows the President to proclaim as national monuments prehistoric and historic sites and structures (and other objects of historic and scientific interest) on federal lands, and the Historic Sites Act of 1935 which established the National Historic Landmarks Survey (see Section 1.2(a) for a discussion of the NHL program). Two important policy-setting laws that followed the adoption of the NHPA are the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. In the realm of natural heritage conservation, there is a great deal of national legislation that provides a policy framework for conserving the nation's significant natural resources. Among the most important of these laws are: the Wilderness Act of 1964, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, the National Marine Sanctuaries Act of 1972, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the Clean Water Act of 1972, the Clean Air Act of 1970, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. Many states have adopted their own, generally similar, laws regarding natural and cultural heritage preservation and environmental protection.

Within the National Park Service, national policy is set first and foremost by the National Park Service Organic Act which established the National Park Service in 1916 as a separate agency within the Department of the Interior. The NPS Organic Act sets broad policies for the national park system. The Act states that the national parks have been set aside for the fundamental purpose of conserving "the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein. They also state that NPS is to provide for the enjoyment of the parks "in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

While Congress has given NPS the management discretion to allow certain impacts within parks, that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement (enforceable by the federal courts) that NPS must leave park resources and values unimpaired, unless a particular law directly and specifically provides otherwise. This, the cornerstone of the Organic Act, establishes the primary responsibility of the National Park Service. It ensures that park resources and values will continue to exist in a condition that will allow the American people to have present and future

opportunities for enjoyment of them. Before approving a proposed action that could lead to an impairment of park resources and values, an NPS decision-maker must consider the impacts of the proposed action and determine, in writing, that the activity will not lead to an impairment of park resources and values. If there would be an impairment, the action may not be approved.

Congress has also established broad policies on specific topics such as concessions management and protecting wild and scenic rivers. Generally, each National Park area is established by an Act of Congress (some have been established as National Monuments by the President under authority of the Antiquities Act); Congress includes in the authorizing legislation the specific purposes for which the park or area is being set aside as part of the National Park System. For many parks, specific policies applicable uniquely to those parks are also outlined in the authorizing legislation, which may sometimes vary markedly from the generic legislation. More specific policy guidance for the National Park Service is found in the NPS *Management Policies* document which directs the way NPS managers are to make decisions on a wide range of issues that come before them. The *Management Policies* direct site managers to incorporate their World Heritage designation in public information and interpretive programs.

In addition to the Organic Act and NPS *Management Policies*, there is a broad array of federal laws, regulations, Presidential orders, and administrative policies on many specific topics from air pollution to the repatriation of cultural remains to Indian tribes that govern the administration of National Park Service areas. The specific laws and policies that apply particularly to US World Heritage Sites are listed in Section II of this report.

Policies that aim to give the cultural and natural heritage a life in the community

Section 1 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) specifically states that “the historical and cultural foundations of our Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people.” Passage of NHPA in 1966 was a watershed event. It marked a fundamental shift in how Americans—and the Federal government—regarded the role of historic preservation in modern life. Before 1966, historic preservation was mainly understood in one-dimensional terms: the proverbial historic shrine or Indian burial mound secured by lock and key—usually in a national park—set aside from modern life as an icon for study and appreciation. NHPA largely changed that approach, signaling a much broader more complex historic preservation mosaic that Americans know today. Like the American culture it mirrors, historic preservation today is perhaps best defined in terms of its diversity.

As diverse as American culture is, so too is the diversity of historic properties that express this rich cultural legacy. The US definition of historic properties has evolved to encompass a much broader interpretation of American history, one that acknowledges significance at the local level. Further, historic properties are now understood and appreciated as part of—not isolated from—the landscape to which they belong. It is only logical that this more complex view of what historic properties are, and how Americans relate to them has engendered equally complex challenges concerning their preservation and treatment.

The NHPA not only strengthened the role of the Federal government as a preservation leader, but established a partnership with States, through State Historic Preservation Officers and a statewide preservation program tailored to State and local needs.

Within the realm of natural conservation, there tends to be greater governmental ownership of natural areas, so consequently the ways in which citizens incorporate these areas into the life of their communities is somewhat more limited. However, many agencies (public and private) which manage natural areas go to great lengths to provide on-site and off-site recreational and educational opportunities for adults and children. In addition, in recent years, citizens organizations and community groups have in many cases become involved in the management and planning for these areas.

Integrating protection of World Heritage Properties into comprehensive planning programs

All US World Heritage sites undertake comprehensive planning on a regular basis. Units of the National Park System (including the 17 World Heritage sites made up in whole or in part by National Parks) are required by law and policy to prepare General Management Plans that address how resources will be protected, what facilities are needed to accommodate visitors, carrying capacity, and potential boundary changes. All of the NPS World Heritage sites currently have a general management plan (or master plan) which may be recent, or may have been completed several to many years ago. The general management plans are long range plans intended to guide the site or area for 15- 20 years and to address changing needs related to visitor use and resource preservation. NPS areas also develop strategic plans, program plans, and other shorter-term implementation plans on specific topics including cultural or natural resources, interpretation, and land acquisition. Each site's planning takes into account its World Heritage values and lays out a program for protection of those values.

In addition to general management plans and other internal plans, site managers and staff of NPS units frequently participate in planning processes going on beyond their boundaries in adjacent and nearby jurisdictions. Provisions in NPS Management Policies and Federal laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act require NPS to be consulted and, if appropriate, take an active role in reviewing and commenting on proposed federal, or federally licensed or funded, actions that might affect NPS units.

b. Status of services for protection, conservation, and presentation.

In accordance with the decentralized system of natural and cultural heritage conservation in the United States, the varying management entities, Federal, State, local, Tribal, and private, maintain their own services for protection, conservation and presentation.

The National Park Service directly administers all or portions of 17 of the 20 US World Heritage sites as part of the National Park System which encompasses 387 units or areas in a variety of designation categories (for further information consult the web site, <http://www.nps.gov/legacy/nomenclature.html>).

Under the direction of the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, the National Park Service also oversees US participation in the World Heritage Convention, providing national coordination and oversight. The nonfederal World Heritage Sites are owned respectively by a Tribal government, a private foundation, two State governments and a Territorial government. Each of these entities is responsible for the protection, conservation, and presentation of its respective site. Details about each of these are included in Section II of this report.

c. Scientific and technical studies and research

In the United States, World Heritage Sites benefit from ongoing and extensive scientific and technical research at the national level, although little of the research is directed specifically at or derives directly from the World Heritage designation of the properties, per se. Many of the direct benefits come from National Park Service programs, and through studies from other governmental agencies and academic institutions, and are integral to the knowledge and understanding that enable conservation of these sites. Extensive research takes place at each National Park as described in greater detail in Section II of this report.

An overview of current science and research initiatives taking place within the NPS can be found at <http://www1.nature.nps.gov/scienceresearch/index.htm>. Comprehensive programs include the following:

- Legislatively mandated in 1998, the **Inventory and Monitoring of Park Natural Resources Program** is in its first phase of development. The program provides a way to determine trends in the condition of parks as affected by management practices and restoration efforts as well as provide early warning of impending threats. On the inventory side, the NPS is currently collecting and mapping data on the diversity of plants and animals in the parks, the distribution of threatened and endangered species, geophysical features such as soils and geology, and information on air and water quality. Once this baseline is established, indicators can be selected for long-term monitoring that will highlight the changes in the resources over time; this data can then be used to better understand which types of variation are “normal” and which signal impending impairment or the need for a change in management practices. While inventory and monitoring used to take place on a site-by-site basis, networks of parks are now being established that help resource managers identify similarities at different sites and decision makers understand national trends. More information on this program can be obtained at <http://www1.nature.nps.gov/protectingrestoring/im/inventoryandmonitoring.htm> and <http://www.nature.nps.gov/im/>.
- The NPS is creating a **digital data archive** that will serve the World Heritage Sites by making comprehensive information available to researchers in consistent terms and formats so that it can be used both for site-to-site comparisons and at the national level. One such project is **NPSpecies**, a national database that will make information on the biodiversity in National Parks available over the Internet (information will be posted at <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/apps/npspp/index.htm> as it becomes available).

- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)** are an increasingly integral part of research and management for protected areas. The NPS is moving towards organizing and standardizing GIS data on a national level. As a part of the Inventory and Monitoring Program, mapping data are being developed for geology, soils, vegetation, species, and air and water quality indicators. Concurrently digital maps of political boundaries, transportation systems, elevation models and aerial photographs are being developed for use on the same systems. Much of this data is accessible at <http://www.nps.gov/gis/>, a utility already widely used by universities and other researchers nationwide; more data will be provided as it becomes available.
- The NPS studies the relationship of people with the parks through its **Social Science Program** (<http://www.nps.gov/socialscience/intro.htm>). Topics such as visitor satisfaction, public involvement in decision processes, and race and ethnicity in relation to park use are explored. One of the major projects this program funded was the University of Michigan creation of the **Money Generation Model (M2M)**, a tool for estimating the economic impacts of park visitor spending on a local region (see <http://www.prr.msu.edu/MGM2/> for more information).

The primary entity within the National Park Service undertaking research and technical studies on cultural heritage preservation matters is the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT). NCPTT is an interdisciplinary program of the National Park Service to advance the art, craft and science of historic preservation in the fields of archeology, historic architecture, historic landscapes, objects and materials conservation, and interpretation. NCPTT serves public and private practitioners through research, education and information management. Also, the National Park Service, through its Cultural Resources programs, maintains national historic preservation standards (the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Historic Preservation”) and provides wide-ranging technical assistance in the interpretation of the standards.

While the NPS is undertaking substantial efforts at data collection and organization, it relies on outside entities for much of the scientific research and analysis of natural resources that is used in service of the parks. Non-NPS studies that actually take place within the parks must first be approved through a permitting process; a perusal of investigators’ annual reports can provide a sense of what types of studies have recently been pursued (<http://science.nature.nps.gov/research>).

At the Federal level, other agencies conduct extensive research related to conservation that contributes to the management and protection of World Heritage Sites. The National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII, accessed at http://biology.usgs.gov/pub_aff/usgsbio.html) is a multi-agency project aimed at providing the data from such research to the public. Individual agencies involved in research relevant to protected areas include:

- **US Geological Survey (USGS)** (<http://www.usgs.gov>) is the main bureau within the Department of the Interior responsible for scientific research. Their work breaks down among four disciplines: biology (http://biology.usgs.gov/pub_aff/usgsbio.html), geography (<http://geography.usgs.gov/index.html>), geology

(<http://geology.usgs.gov/index.shtml>), and water (<http://water.usgs.gov/>). (More information on national programs can be obtained at http://biology.usgs.gov/pub_aff/natprog.html)

- In addition to coordinating its own research through bureaus such as the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the **US Department of Agriculture** (<http://www.usda.gov>) also administers an electronic catalogue of current research (<http://cris.csrees.usda.gov/>) that includes efforts from various federal and state agencies, including the USGS Biological Resources Discipline (see above).
- The **US Fish and Wildlife Service's** (USFWS; <http://www.usfws.gov>) "National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation" (<http://fa.r9.fws.gov/surveys/surveys.html>) provides valuable insight into the economic and environmental impact of recreational use of protected areas.
- The **Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA; <http://www.epa.gov>) oversees extensive research in issues relating to environmental quality, such as air and water quality, biomonitoring, and watershed protection. More information on EPA's research programs can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/research.html>.

Much of the research that these agencies fund, as well as extensive independent research, is conducted at the many public and private colleges and universities throughout the country. There are over 1500 accredited academic institutions in the United States offering advanced degrees (masters equivalent or above) where such research takes place. Additionally, several national non-profit organizations conduct and/or fund relevant research on National Parks.

d. Identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation.

Legal and administrative measures

Identification, protection and conservation of heritage in the US takes place at various levels of government. There are Federal, State, and local laws which govern how the respective governments conduct their responsibilities in this area. Section 401 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) outlines the duties of the Secretary of the Interior in carrying out US commitments with respect to the World Heritage Convention (including the process by which sites are nominated). Other than the NHPA, there is no legislation in the United States that specifically addresses World Heritage. All US World Heritage Sites are either National Park Service units or non-federal sites that have been designated as National Historic Landmarks (NHLs). NHLs are protected from adverse federal action through a provision in the NHPA that requires federal agencies to determine the impact of any federally licensed or sponsored activity on NHLs and National Register properties. A responsible Federal agencies proposing an action that could harm an NHL must, to the maximum extent possible, undertake planning and other actions to avert or minimize any harm to the Landmark.

As stated previously, inclusion in the World Heritage List confers no additional direct protection to sites under US law. The key laws covering cultural and natural heritage have been referenced in 1.3.a. Further information on the Federal laws, regulations, and Presidential Executive Orders that pertain to cultural resources management in the United States is available at the following

web site: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/linklaws.htm>. A database of a wide range of historic preservation legislation enacted by individual State and Territorial governments is available at the following web site: http://www.ncsl.org/programs/arts/statehist_intro.htm. A thorough list of Federal laws for the protection of natural resources is available from the US Fish & Wildlife Service web site: <http://laws.fws.gov/lawsdigest/reslaws.html>.

Given that all or portions of 17 of the 20 US World Heritage Sites are federally-owned and managed as units of the National Park System, the most relevant laws and regulations are those that govern the administration of areas under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service; these have also been referenced in 1.3 a. A listing of the principle policy related laws is available on the National Park Service's Office of Policy website at: <http://data2.itc.nps.gov/npspolicy/getlaws.cfm>. The specific laws and regulations that apply to each US World Heritage site are included in Section II of this report.

International Conventions for Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection

Although not directly related to World Heritage, the United States is a signatory to a number of international conventions for the protection of cultural and natural heritage. A list of the conventions and implementing US laws is provided below. Based on the subject matter of each convention, different agencies of the US Government are assigned responsibility for leading US participation in these agreements under the coordination of the US Department of State.

- African Elephant Conservation Act of 1989
- Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997
- Conservation of Arctic Flora & Fauna
- Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar)
- Convention to Combat Desertification
- Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention of 1972)
- Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere
- Great Apes Conservation Act of 2000
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 2000
- Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994
- Migratory Birds Convention
- Migratory Bird and Game Mammal Treaty with Mexico

- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970)

Financial measures

Historic preservation efforts in the United States are funded by a diverse network of sources from all levels of government and the private sector. A mutually supportive network of governmental bodies and organizations has evolved that provides direct and indirect support to the myriad of preservation projects undertaken each year. The federal Historic Preservation Fund, administered by the National Park Service, funds the national historic preservation program and supports the work of State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, and Certified Local Governments. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation which advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy is funded by annual appropriation from Congress. National Park Service preservation programs, including the National Register of Historic Places, the National Historic Landmarks program and others, are funded through the agency's annual appropriation from Congress.

Beyond helping to maintain the infrastructure of the national preservation program, the federal government also provides significant support for preservation through a variety of channels. NPS, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Agriculture administer programs targeted to historic preservation projects. There are also many other sources of federal financial assistance which, while not earmarked specifically for historic preservation, can contribute substantially to such efforts. In addition, there are federal tax incentives to spur private investment in historic preservation. More information on the federal tax incentives and on NPS grants for historic preservation can be found at the following website:

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/grants.htm>

The federal government also spends millions of dollars each year for individual agency preservation activities, including funding preservation of federally owned historic properties. A comprehensive compilation of sources of federal, state, tribal, local, and private financial assistance for historic preservation projects is available on the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation's website at: <http://www.achp.gov/funding.html#toc>.

e. Training

There is an extensive network of training and educational opportunities in natural and cultural heritage management in the United States. Most major universities in the US offer degree programs in some aspect of cultural and/or natural or environmental management. In addition, agencies responsible for the management of sites offer their own training programs.

The National Park Service provides extensive training and educational support for its workforce. Opportunities include:

- Professional skills development

Classes, workshops and seminars are provided at eleven training centers across the nation. These include NPS facilities as well as affiliations with training centers from other governmental conservation and land-management bureaus (for a list of centers, see <http://data2.itc.nps.gov/hafe/training/centers.cfm>). Training is offered for each career field within NPS, including such areas as Natural Resources Stewardship and Historic Preservation Skills & Crafts; classes range from “Preservation Gardening: The Basics of Historic Landscapes Maintenance” to “GIS Overview For Natural Resource Conservation.” The catalog of currently available NPS courses can be viewed at <http://www.nps.gov/training/pdf/2003-catalog.pdf>; affiliates’ catalogs can be obtained through their respective bureau’s site, such as US Fish and Wildlife at <http://training.fws.gov/> and the Bureau of Land Management at <http://www.ntc.blm.gov/>.

The Department of the Interior (DOI), the parent agency to these bureaus, offers career-management training through “DOI University” (<http://www.doi.gov/training/index.html>). Training through appropriate private and non-profit institutions is also available at the discretion of supervisors. Additionally, distance-learning opportunities are increasingly utilized through either computer-based training or teleconferencing (see <http://www.telmps.net> for more information on the NPS “Technology Enhanced Learning” program).

- Support for education and developmental advancement

NPS offers an array of scholarships and other assistance for employees seeking further education and development in areas related to their field. These range from the Edwin C. Bearss Fellowship, a competitive graduate-level fellowship in American History or American Studies (geared towards employees engaged in historical research, management, and education), to the Maintenance Worker Skills Fund, a cost-share funding program for local training for maintenance workers. Additionally, NPS runs several in-house one- to two-year developmental track programs to foster continuous learning and cultivate leadership potential. More information on these grants and programs can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/training/develop.htm>.

Training at the three non-NPS World Heritage Sites is administered individually, although personnel at these sites do have access to training provided through NPS’s National Center for Preservation Technology and Training which runs a clearinghouse of training and education opportunities, (http://www.ncptt.nps.gov/NCPTT2/Clear_Training.stm.) In addition to having the benefit of its own resources as an institution of learning, Monticello and University of Virginia in Charlottesville routinely send staff off-site for specialized training.

Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site employees have access to classes given by the state of Illinois (see <http://www.state.il.us/cms/persnl/atd/class.htm?w>). These focus exclusively on administrative and compliance training, rather than the development of skills related to conservation and stewardship. Employees do attend a yearly interpretation conference that includes short seminars, and hold informal “brainstorming sessions” with staff from nearby sites and museums with similar concerns; however, no more formalized training opportunities related to the specific nature of their work are available to the staff.

World Heritage Training

On an occasional basis, the National Park Service has convened seminars for Superintendents and site managers of US World Heritage sites. The seminars have not only provided an opportunity for the managers to share their experiences and perspectives, but have served to enhance awareness and understanding of the World Heritage Convention. One such meeting, the Strategic Planning Session for Enhanced Implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the United States, took place in 1992 in Santa Fe, New Mexico in conjunction with the 16th Session of the World Heritage Committee. The site managers at the meeting produced a draft National Park Service strategy plan with recommendations on how to improve implementation of the Convention at the site level. The draft strategy included: revising NPS policy guidelines to integrate World Heritage designation into sections affecting site planning, resource management decisions, interpretation, visitor use, and special park uses. Another meeting, the International Seminar on the Management of Internationally Significant Protected Natural Areas in the Western Hemisphere, was held in Miami, Florida in 1997. Participants in the Miami meeting received an orientation to the processes of the World Heritage Convention, its purposes, and programs and discussed its implications for site management. They took field trips to Everglades National Park to observe and discuss the management issues facing that World Heritage site.

Training specific to an employee's role as caretaker of a World Heritage Site has been made available, as needed, at individual sites. For example, Glacier National Park conducted training for its staff following the park's inscription on the World Heritage List to address concerns about the designation and its implications. Education on these issues not only dispelled misperceptions and assuaged the staff's doubts, but also made them enthusiastic emissaries to the public as they came to realize that the values behind the World Heritage program were the global equivalent of those principles already guiding their daily work.

1.4 International cooperation and fundraising

Membership of the World Heritage Committee

The United States was the first nation to ratify the World Heritage Convention in 1973 and has been an active participant in the World Heritage Committee over many years. The US hosted the Committee's second Session in 1978 in Washington, DC and its sixteenth Session in 1992 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, serving as Chair of the Committee during those periods. The US has also served as a member of the World Heritage Committee (serving as vice-chair in 1979, 1980, 1991, 1993, and 1997) and participated in several working groups including the ones on Management Effectiveness, Use of the World Heritage Logo, and a subsequent group involved in reviewing the Operational Guidelines.

NPS Bilateral activities

The United States has an excellent working relationship on heritage issues with Canada. In 1998, the National Park Service and Parks Canada signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in the management, research, protection, conservation and presentation of national parks and historic sites. As previously stated (Section 1.2.c., Benefits of Listing), the United States and Canada also cooperate closely in managing the cross-border parks jointly designated as World Heritage Sites. The close coordination between the two countries in the preparation of this report (including the Section II reports for their shared World Heritage Sites) is another example of the strong collaboration that takes place between them.

The National Park Service, through its Office of International Affairs, maintains bilateral agreements with a several countries which sometimes involve exchanges of personnel and assistance from the US to World Heritage sites in those countries. For example, the NPS has an on-going formal relationship with the Mexican government's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). Some of the activities under that agreement have included technical assistance to the Paquime/Casas Grande and Monte Alban World Heritage sites, training for management of Mexico's cultural World Heritage sites, providing materials for the new management library and archives center for World Heritage archeological sites located in Oaxaca, and cooperative training to combat international trafficking in cultural property taken illegally from Mexico's World Heritage sites.

Similarly, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a team of NPS staff worked with counterparts in the Indian government on the Agra Heritage Project. In March 1988, the first joint Indo-US planning effort, known as the Taj Assessment Team, worked on-site and contributed to a planning framework that considered the culturally significant sites in Agra (including the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, and Fatehpur Sikria World Heritage Sites), the environment, and issues of visitor use and services. This initial work was followed by a subsequent on-site mission in 1989/90, sponsored research in 1990-93, and a 1994 Agra Environmental Workshop. The project team and reviewers made numerous recommendations for pollution abatement and tourism development planning, launching a major program that attracted multilateral funding and participation. On a smaller scale, NPS staff helped the Venezuelan parks agency, INPARQUES, establish a Geographic Information System (GIS) to help it manage its parks, including Canaima, a World Heritage Site, in 1998 and 1999. More recently, NPS has provided training in concessions management to INPARQUES.

In 2004, NPS is partnering with the World Monuments Fund to send 3 NPS professional staff to provide on-site expertise and training in cultural landscape management and planning at the Preah Khan Temple complex at Angkor, a World Heritage Site in Cambodia.

Under the NPS's 'Sister Parks' program, administered through the Office of International Affairs, US National Parks are twinned with national parks in other countries; among these are several NPS World Heritage units that have developed relationships with counterpart World Heritage parks in other parts of the world. These partnerships include: Chaco Culture in New Mexico and Copan in

Honduras; Everglades in Florida and Pantanal National Park in Brazil; and, though not a park, Philadelphia Support Office, and Sagamatha National Park in Nepal. One non-World Heritage NPS unit, Badlands National Park, has a sister park relationship with Hortobagy National Park, a World Heritage Site in Hungary.

US Department of the Interior activities

Through its International Technical Assistance Program (ITAP), the US Department of the Interior (DOI), the nation's principal conservation agency, provides training and technical assistance to less-developed countries in areas in which the Department's staff (through its bureaus, including the National Park Service) have particular expertise. These include, among others, ecotourism planning, concessions management, environmental education, and visitor services. Using donor funds, mostly from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department's ITAP has assisted numerous World Heritage Sites. For example, in 2002 in partnership with the Mundo Maya Organization and the Interamerican Development Bank, a team consisting of three DOI staff (architect, planner, and educator) provided technical assistance to park staff at Tikal in Guatemala in the topics of park planning, visitor services, interpretation and education, and local community outreach. A similar team provided assistance to staff at Copan in Honduras. In Ecuador's Galapagos Islands National Park, DOI has provided a wide range of technical assistance with funding from USAID over a period of several years starting in 1999. The assistance included, for example, providing two experts to assist in the development of an ecotourism plan and an environmental assessment for the Isabela Island unit of the Galapagos Islands National Park. This included working with all relevant partners to develop a scope of work and terms of reference for initial program components, which include community organization, a socioeconomic study and the development of an ecotourism plan. DOI has also helped the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos with a number of projects including a fisheries database, interpretive exhibits, invasive species, law enforcement, marine biological monitoring, and a marine reserve management plan. Several other World Heritage Sites, such as Bwindi National Park in Uganda, have received technical assistance through DOI's ITAP. More detailed information on ITAP's work can be found at the following website: http://www.doi.gov/intl/itap/semi_annual.htm.

US Federal Agency Initiatives

In addition to the work if funds through the Department of the Interior, the US Agency for International Development, the primary provider of US foreign assistance, funds a number of projects that assist World Heritage Sites in developing countries. USAID's Parks-in-Peril program is a prime example. With USAID support, the Nature Conservancy and its partner organizations have helped foster the conversion of 37 of the most biologically important areas in Latin America and the Carribean from paper parks into fully functional protected areas. Among the parks assisted are several World Heritage Sites including the Noel Kempff Mercado National Park in Bolivia, Morne Trois Pitons National Park in Dominica, the Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve in Honduras, the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve in Mexico, and the Darien Biosphere Reserve in Panama.

Other Federal agencies such as the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Forest Service have international programs that provide technical assistance and funding that benefits World Heritage Sites in countries around the globe. For example, in the Pantanal--the world's largest freshwater

ecosystem located in the Upper Paraguay River basin that spans across parts of Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia--the Forest Service is working with two US NGO, Ducks Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy, on two separate but linked conservation management projects. First, Ducks Unlimited and the USDA Forest Service recently completed a pilot project- a conservation assessment- that encompassed the southwestern most part of the Pantanal ecosystem, a transect that spans all three countries. The effort integrated the work of many local partners to standardize geographically-based data. By analyzing satellite images and existing data, researchers stratified the information and generated a shared database, which the public and private sector institutions can now use to detect ecological changes and complete impact assessments for use in conservation planning.

Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation

Through its Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, the US State Department is helping countries around the globe preserve historic sites and other cultural treasures, including World Heritage Sites. The fund was established by Congress in 2001 to assist less-developed countries in preserving their cultural heritage by providing direct small grant support. In 2003, \$28,400 was provided to the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site in South Africa, for archeological investigation and to help upgrade research facilities at the site. In the same year, \$30,600 was given to Serbia and Montenegro to restore a section of the 6th century ramparts of the Kotor Fortress, a World Heritage Site on the Adriatic Coast. In 2001, a \$27,000 grant from the Fund supported a two-week rock art conservation training workshop in Tsodilo, a World Heritage Site in Botswana, while in Pakistan, \$18,033 was provided to restore the exposed stone walls around and opposite two Buddhist stupa blocks in the ruins at Sirkap in Taxila, a World Heritage Site.

Non-governmental Organizations

US-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have for many years been leaders in international conservation and preservation efforts. Of particular relevance for World Heritage are the efforts of the World Monuments Fund (WMF), the Getty Conservation Institute, Conservation International, and the United Nations Foundation. The latter 2 NGOs announced a new partnership with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in November 2002. The three-year \$15 million partnership aims to protect and conserve the world's most biodiversity-rich places, including 16 out of 25 global biodiversity hotspots which contain World Heritage Sites. The partners are working with another US NGO, RARE, and the Aveda Corporation to develop new models for using ecotourism to conserve biodiversity through a four-year demonstration project in six World Heritage sites: Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, and El Vizcaino Biosphere Reserve in Mexico; Tikal National Park in Guatemala; Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve in Honduras; Komodo National Park and Ujung Kulon National Park in Indonesia.

Since 1965, the World Monuments Fund has played a leadership role in the rescue and preservation of imperiled works of art and architecture. WMF is the only private, nonprofit organization devoted to onsite conservation of monuments and sites worldwide; to date, it has sponsored 400 projects in eighty countries, many of which are World Heritage Sites. The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) works internationally to advance the field of conservation through scientific research, field projects, education and training, and the dissemination of information in

various media. Among its current field projects is the Maya Initiative project. Two World Heritage sites were selected for the project's initial work—Joya de Cerén, El Salvador and Copán, Honduras. Both components include training and capacity building for professionals and technicians, which are integrated at all stages of the project and adapted to specific conditions at the site.

Participation in International Endeavors

The US has participated in a number of international endeavors related to World Heritage. In 2000, the National Park Service participated in a capacity-building workshop in South Africa intended to assist the countries of sub-Saharan Africa compile their World Heritage Periodic Reports and prepare nominations to the World Heritage list. Similarly, the US has, on occasion, participated in meetings of experts organized by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. For example, in March 2004, the National Park Service, in cooperation with the World Monuments Fund, provided financial support for the Meeting of Experts for the Recuperation of American Fortifications in Campeche, Mexico. In addition, several NPS staff made presentations at the meeting.

In 2002, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration jointly organized with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and with advice from the National Park Service, a World Heritage Biodiversity Workshop in Hanoi, Vietnam. The purpose of the workshop (in which marine scientific experts participated) was to reach consensus on potential tropical coastal, marine, and small island ecosystems for potential nomination to the World Heritage List.

The National Park Service's Conservation Study Institute and Quebec Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment convened a working session in partnership with the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) World Commission on Protected Areas in June 1999. The purpose of the session was to discuss new directions and share international experience and innovations for protecting landscapes with natural and cultural value around the world. Twenty-two landscape conservationists participated, representing an international mix of approaches and issues. Case studies were presented from places as diverse as Andean South America, Oceania, the Eastern Caribbean, Europe, and northeastern North America. The meeting was hosted by the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock, Vermont, and co-sponsored by the George Wright Society, the International Centre for Protected Landscapes, and the United States Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (US/ICOMOS).

1.5 Education, Information, and awareness building.

The U.S. National Park Service strives to promote and provide education and awareness-building around issues related to the conservation and stewardship of protected areas, both within the boundaries of its parks and nationwide. Specific information on education, information and awareness building activities at US World Heritage Sites is contained in Section II of this report.

Interpretive Rangers staff all NPS World Heritage sites. They serve to educate visitors on the natural and cultural history and present dynamics of the parks, and in so doing, help foment those visitors' intellectual and emotional connections to the parks. NPS recognizes interpretation as fundamental to its mission. To structure and ensure the growth of its capacity in this regard, it has several plans and programs in place or under development:

A **Comprehensive Interpretive Planning** system. This is implemented at the park level to help units decide what their objectives are, who their audiences are, and what mix of media and personal services to use. Many parks throughout the service have either started or completed their Comprehensive Interpretive Plans.

An **Interpretive Development Program**, comprised of 3 parts: national standards for interpretation which include outcome-based descriptions for the park ranger/interpreter career ladder; a training curriculum that can be delivered at the local level; and a certification/peer review program that measures interpretive products against a national standard. It is designed to foster accountability and professionalism in interpretation in the NPS and set a national standard for interpretive effectiveness that results in a higher level of public stewardship for park resources.

Educational asset mapping. Such assets include talented and skilled employees, dynamic programs, media, education centers, and education partners. Collected information will be made available service-wide through an online database, and will help to illuminate potential linkages between programs and partners as well as identify gaps in the overall program.

National Park Service Education Council. Though still in its inception, the Council is envisioned as an interdisciplinary advisory forum, a leader in advocating the renewal of the education mission nationally and in the field, that will coordinate with national education partners within the service in order to build capacity and create additional opportunities for learning and expanded partnerships.

Learning Centers. 32 Learning Centers have been mandated through the NPS's Natural Resource Challenge plan (<http://www.nature.nps.gov/challengedoc/index.htm>), several of which are now up and running. They are developed in designated networks of parks to facilitate the use of parks as libraries of knowledge and support visiting researchers, and to transfer information about park resources to park-based interpreters and the public at large through outreach to schools, web site development, and other means. More information can be found at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/challenge/brochures/learningcenters.pdf>.

The National Park Service also strives to reach beyond its park boundaries and educate the public-at-large. Such efforts include The **National Park Service Wilderness Education and Partnership Plan**, which attempts to unite interagency efforts and non-governmental participants to broaden awareness, understanding, appreciation, and support of wilderness in an increasingly diverse American public (see <http://www.nature.nps.gov/wilderness/> for more information).

One of the most rapidly developing avenues for reaching the public is the Internet, which the NPS is increasingly taking advantage of as a tool for education. **ParkNet** (www.nps.gov) is the public portal to the Park Service. It includes pages for each park as well as **NatureNet**

(<http://www.nature.nps.gov/>), a repository for information and links relating to natural resources; **Links to the Past** (<http://www.cr.nps.gov/>), the cultural resources section of the site; and **InfoZone** (http://www.nps.gov/pub_aff/index.htm), providing information on the Service itself.

The website also includes another section, **LearnNPS** (<http://www.nps.gov/learn/>), which highlights another of the National Park Service's educational priorities: children. Through the website teachers and students alike can find relevant materials relating to the National Parks and conservation in general. The former have access to curriculum-based educational programs; listings for park-sponsored teacher workshops; and catalogs of materials, including traveling trunks and kits, audio and video products, and print-based media. One example is **Aliens in Your Neighborhood!** (<http://www.webs.uidaho.edu/nsan/aliens/alienhome.htm>), a curriculum for educating middle-school children on invasive species.

Students on the 'Net can enjoy **WebRangers** (<http://www.nps.gov/webrangers/>), which enlightens while it amuses through online games and activities. Its goal is to shed a small amount of National Park light on many young people who do not know about national parks or are unable to visit them. This is an offshoot of the NPS **Junior Rangers** (<http://www.nps.gov/learn/grrangerzone/ranger.htm>), a program that educates through merit-earning activities at various parks.

The **Parks as Classrooms** program is the curriculum-based educational program of the National Park Service. It is specifically designed to help teachers meet their curriculum needs through the resources found at national park sites, using the natural, cultural, and historical resources of parks to offer free or low-cost opportunities to supplement classroom instruction. Programs are offered by individual park sites in collaboration with local school districts and community organizations. They are interdisciplinary and emphasize experiential teaching and learning techniques. For more information, see <http://www.nps.gov/learn/grschoolzone/grpac/grpac.htm>.

1.6 Conclusions and recommended actions

a. Main conclusions

Cultural and natural heritage, including World Heritage, is well-protected and managed in the United States. There is a strong national policy and legislative underpinning for both cultural and natural heritage protection which supports the stewardship of the country's significant cultural and natural treasures. Over many years, a vital network of administrative structures at various levels of government has been developed to guide the ongoing professional management of large numbers of heritage sites. Financial support generally assures that a basic level of preservation can be maintained. While there continue to be challenges in caring for these sites, such as limits to financial and human resources and a strong tradition of private property, from an international perspective, the US heritage preservation system functions quite well.

With respect to World Heritage Sites specifically, this conclusion is supported by the record of the World Heritage Committee's monitoring of the existing sites in the United States. As described in the accompanying report, *Application of the World Heritage Convention in North America*, the

Committee has, over a period of years, raised concerns about issues affecting a number of World Heritage Sites in the US. Upon discussion of these issues, however, the Committee has been assured that their World Heritage values are being maintained to an acceptable standard. Details about factors currently affecting World Heritage Sites in the US are provided in the site-specific reports included in Section II of this report.

The main reason for the high level of stewardship of World Heritage in the US derives from the fact that the US sites are mostly owned and managed by the national government, a situation which may be different than in many other countries. At the sites where this is not the case, two are under the ownership of State governments and managed for preservation and another is owned by a well-established private foundation whose principal goal is the long-term maintenance of the site as a national shrine in homage to an early US president. A fourth non-federal site is La Fortaleza which is owned by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and maintained as the residence of the governor. As a consequence of the fact that prior to their inscription on the World Heritage List, the US sites were already legally designated for protection and were being professionally managed as natural and cultural sites, the World Heritage inscription has been seen primarily as an honorific label in the US. Again, this may be quite different than in other countries where World Heritage designation, in and of itself, confers direct legal protection or imposes a strict management regime. With increased emphasis on reactive reporting and periodic reporting, the World Heritage List appears to be evolving in recent years, under the direction of the World Heritage Committee, from a designation alone to a system or network of monitoring and assistance focused on select sites. The World Heritage program in the US is well positioned to adapt to this new emphasis given that so many of the US sites are under the direct management control of the national government and due to the rigorous stewardship requirements imposed by the US government on all nonfederal properties that have been designated as US World Heritage sites.

Because all but three of the designated US World Heritage Sites are owned and managed directly by the Federal government through the National Park Service, the nation's principal conservation agency, they enjoy an even higher level of protection and stewardship than might otherwise be the case. For example, extensive scientific and technical research takes place in the United States that benefits the management the US properties. The National Park Service is in the process of several major projects regarding the collection and distribution of data related to its parks (including the 17 that are World Heritage sites) that will facilitate research and analysis by the NPS itself as well as outside parties. NPS also utilizes the research of other governmental agencies, particularly that of the US Geological Survey, which is responsible for much of the "hard" scientific inquiry that takes place within the Department of the Interior. Much government-funded as well as independent research takes place in the extensive array of academic institutions operating in the United States. Together these efforts constitute a rich pool of knowledge from which site managers draw to improve the management and protection of US World Heritage Sites.

Similarly, the National Park Service runs a broad and robust training program, offering classes and workshops on a wide array of topics related to natural and cultural conservation and stewardship. The courses are reasonably accessible, being held in multiple locations across the country as well as remotely via computer or videoconferencing. As a result of NPS's relationship with other governmental agencies involved in land management and ecological conservation, the breadth of courses available to its workforce is extremely comprehensive. The agency also offers competitive

fellowships and grants for the pursuit of higher education related to an employee's field. Continued funding and institutional support will ensure that the NPS is able to maintain the level of skill and professionalism required to be an effective steward of World Heritage Sites.

b. Proposed future actions and timeframe

National priorities

The United States as a signatory to the World Heritage Convention is committed to ongoing improvement, as necessary, in managing the values for which its properties have been inscribed on the List of World Heritage. In order to accomplish this the National Park Service will work with its Superintendents at World Heritage National Parks and property managers from non-federal sites, with non-governmental organizations, State, Tribal, and local governments to identify appropriate and reasonable actions that should be taken in the future.

Key actions to be undertaken within the next reporting cycle include:

- greater efforts to raise the visibility, awareness, and understanding of World Heritage in the United States;
- research and data gathering regarding the economic benefits of World Heritage designation in the United States;
- training of National Park Service and non-federal staff at the various US World Heritage Sites on the World Heritage, including the meaning of inscription on the World Heritage List, and best practices in interpreting World Heritage for the public;
- building upon and strengthening the network of North American World Heritage Sites (including Canada and the United States) through a variety of means;
- educating World Heritage Site managers on the specific outstanding universal value of their sites, and the implications for site management (including consideration of the requirement to address a park's outstanding universal value and World Heritage designation explicitly in management plans).
- revising National Park Service policy guidelines to integrate World Heritage designation into text on site planning, resource management decisions, interpretation and visitor use, and special park uses

The primary agency responsible for implementing these actions is the National Park Service.