



Heritage Research Initiatives: Understanding and Assessing the Qualities of Heritage Areas

What are we collecting? Information categories

1. Baseline information

Purpose: to understand social, economic and resource characteristics of heritage areas

- A. Census Bureau demographics
- B. National Park Service resources

2. Additional designations, Federal programs and resources

Purpose: learn about overlapping designations and resources that contribute to economic development and resource protection activities and values

- A. Federal and national designations and recognized resources

3. Indicators

Purpose: Data (change over time) more directly attributable to presence of heritage area

- A. Distribute annual surveys to the heritage areas

4. Leveraging statistics

Purpose: to assess economic impact of Federal investment in local initiatives
Information requested annually from heritage areas

Why collect? Understanding economic, social, and cultural qualities of areas

- Meets GPRA and NPS strategic goals
- Assists understanding of regional constituencies, challenges and needs for assistance
- Helps program tailor **assistance** to meet needs of individual regions
- Enables NPS to work more effectively with Federal and non-Federal partners and encourages new relationships with partners with similar programs and goals
- Enables an assessment of regional change over time/ the impacts of national designation and ensuing activities on regions
- Shapes policy and future development of program

Other efforts to measure and assess heritage areas

- Workshops to understand the why and how of Heritage Areas:
 - Two workshops held in 2003 -- *Implementing a Research Agenda for Heritage Areas*
- NPS and Alliance of National Heritage Areas (ANHA) partnering on MGM2 economic impact study in six heritage areas: results to be released by Michigan State in April
- Ongoing research to:
 - Develop strategies and models for effective management and implementation of heritage programs
 - Understand why heritage areas form and how they impact communities
 - Identify effective management strategies and partnerships efforts across multidisciplinary boundaries

For more information, visit our website at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/>