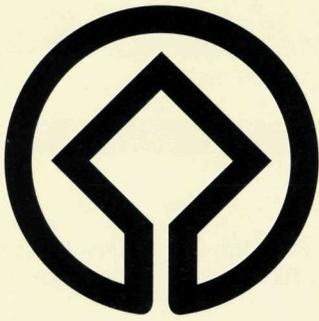


U.S. World Heritage Sites

YELLOWSTONE • INDEPENDENCE HALL
REDWOOD • CARLSBAD CAVERNS
OLYMPIC • CHACO/AZTEC RUINS
EVERGLADES • GRAND CANYON
STATUE OF LIBERTY • MESA VERDE
YOSEMITE • CAHOKIA MOUNDS



The World Heritage emblem symbolizes the interdependence of cultural and natural properties; the square is a form created by humankind and the circle represents nature, the two being intimately linked. The emblem is round like the world and at the same time it is a symbol of protection.

What do national treasures like those above have in common with the Great Wall of China, Taj Mahal, Galapagos Islands, and the Tower of London?

They are World Heritage Sites. They are such outstanding universally recognized natural and cultural features that they attract the admiration and merit the protection of all people worldwide. They are a heritage we Americans share with the world.

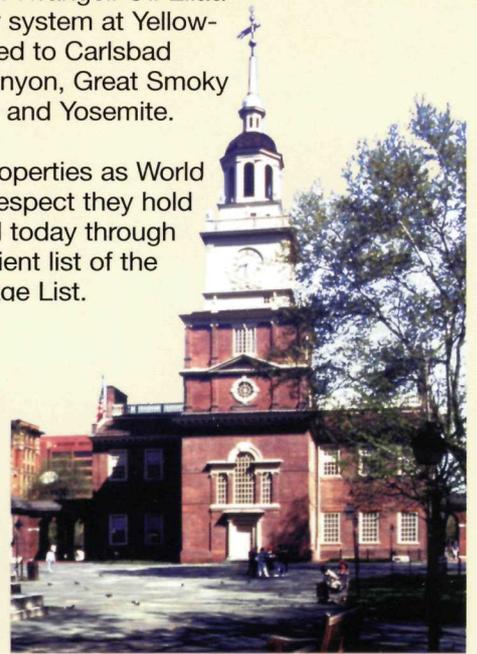
The mere mention of their names evokes this nation's heritage and universal human values. Independence Hall honors the key American governmental documents whose words have echoed in struggles for independence and self-government around the world. The Statue of Liberty, a gift of friendship from the French people, is a universal symbol of freedom. Thomas Jefferson's designs for Monticello and the University of Virginia are recognized worldwide as exceptional examples of Neoclassical architecture. The massive fortifications of San Juan, Puerto Rico, recall the epic struggles of Spain with other European powers for empire in the Americas. Mesa Verde, Chaco/Aztec Ruins, Cahokia, and Pueblo de Taos are supreme achievements of Native American civilizations.

And the U.S. sites embrace extraordinary natural wonders in the national parks: the world's tallest trees at Redwood, the Earth's longest underground passageways at Mammoth Cave, North America's largest assemblage of glaciers and peaks above 16,000 feet at Wrangell-St. Elias/Glacier Bay, the world's greatest geyser system at Yellowstone. Similar superlatives can be applied to Carlsbad Caverns, Everglades, Glacier, Grand Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains, Hawaii Volcanoes, Olympic, and Yosemite.

The inscription of these 20 American properties as World Heritage Sites formally recognizes the respect they hold in the world community. They are linked today through the contemporary successor to the ancient list of the wonders of the world—the World Heritage List.



Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona



Independence Hall, Pennsylvania

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS/GLACIER
BAY/TATSHENSHINI-ALSEK/KLUANE
MAMMOTH CAVE • PUEBLO DE TAOS
LA FORTALEZA/SAN JUAN
MONTICELLO/UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
WATERTON-GLACIER
HAWAII VOLCANOES
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

World Heritage Convention

The United States established Yellowstone as a national park in 1872 and initiated the worldwide movement to protect such areas as national treasures. One hundred years later, during the Nixon administration, the United States introduced the concept of the World Heritage Convention to the international community and was the first nation to ratify it. The World Heritage Convention, the most widely accepted international conservation treaty in human history, is the American national park idea being carried out worldwide.

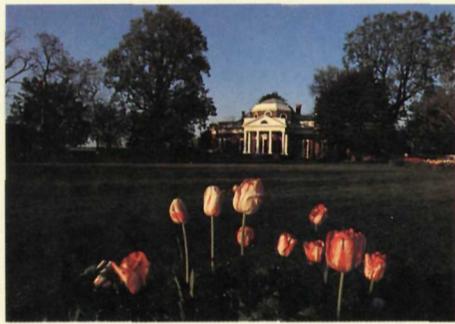
The Convention is based on key principles. Each nation retains sovereignty and control over its World Heritage Sites. All participating nations pledge to identify and protect their key natural and cultural sites as part of the heritage of humanity and to cooperate with each other to achieve that goal.

By the World Heritage Convention's 25th anniversary in 1997, nearly 150 nations had ratified the agreement and placed more than 500 sites on the World Heritage List.



Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho

Voluntary Nominations



Monticello, Virginia

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation

All nations signing the World Heritage Convention voluntarily nominate their own sites embracing superlative natural or cultural attributes. Among other requirements, the sites must be authentic and meet at least one of several highly stringent criteria for universal value.

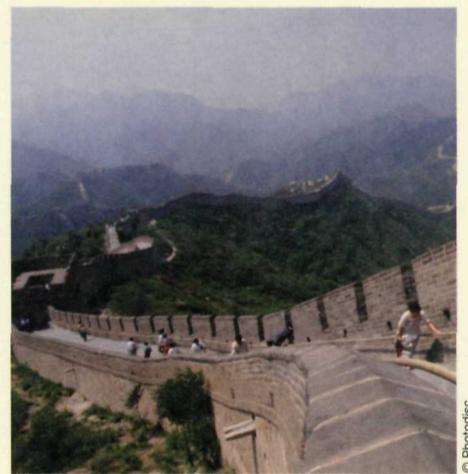
Each signatory to the Convention maintains sovereignty over its sites, is responsible for their protection, and pledges to assist others in preservation efforts. Direct authority over individual properties remains with the national, state, tribal, or local government or private organization in charge.

The Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, is responsible for identifying and nominating U.S. sites to the list. Proposed U.S. sites must be either federal property, such as national parks, or sites already designated as national historic landmarks or national natural landmarks. Properties not owned by the Federal Government are nominated only if their owners wish to do so and pledge to protect their properties in perpetuity.

Most U.S. World Heritage Sites are administered by the National Park Service. The others are managed by states, a

foundation, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and an Indian tribe.

While maintaining authority over their own parks, the United States and Canada jointly nominated two World Heritage Sites: Waterton-Glacier and Wrangell-St. Elias/Glacier Bay/Tatshenshini-Alesek/Kluane. The designations underscored the mutually beneficial interaction among these bordering parks in long-term resource management and in such day-to-day activities as mountain and river rescue operations.



Great Wall of China

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Additional Information

The World Heritage Committee is a 21-nation body elected from among all those that have ratified the Convention to carry out its program of recognition and mutual assistance. The committee reviews nominations by member countries to the World Heritage List and designates World Heritage Sites.

Through the World Heritage Fund, the committee can provide countries requesting assistance with studies, advice, training, and equipment in order to eliminate problems, restore damaged areas, and set up safeguards.

The committee also places properties on a List of World Heritage in Danger. This action may be taken in view of such threats to the sites as natural disasters or civil strife.

The committee's role, however, is limited to placing sites on both lists and offering technical advice and assistance. Inclusion on the List of World Heritage in Danger imposes no legal requirements but can alert others about concerns at the endangered sites.

For more information about the World Heritage Convention, write to: Chief, Office of International Affairs, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240. The National Park Service web page at <http://www.nps.gov> also contains additional information.

This folder was published by the National Park Service with assistance from the U.S. Committee, International Council on Monuments and Sites (US/ICOMOS) in 1997.

U.S. World Heritage Sites

Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, Illinois • Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico • Chaco Culture National Historical Park/Aztec Ruins National Monument*, New Mexico • Everglades National Park, Florida • Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona • Great Smoky Mountains National Park, North Carolina-Tennessee • Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Hawaii • Independence Hall, Pennsylvania • La Fortaleza and San Juan National Historic Site, Puerto Rico • Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky • Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado • Monticello and the University of Virginia, Virginia • Olympic National Park, Washington • Pueblo de Taos, New Mexico • Redwood National Park, California • Statue of Liberty National Monument, New York-New Jersey • Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park**, Alberta-Montana • Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve/Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve/Tatshenshini-Alesek/Kluane**, Alaska-Yukon Territory-British Columbia • Yellowstone National Park, Idaho-Montana-Wyoming • Yosemite National Park, California

* Additional areas administered by the Bureau of Land Management

** Joint listing with Canada



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service