NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPES PROGRAM
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY INITIATIVE
APRIL 1996

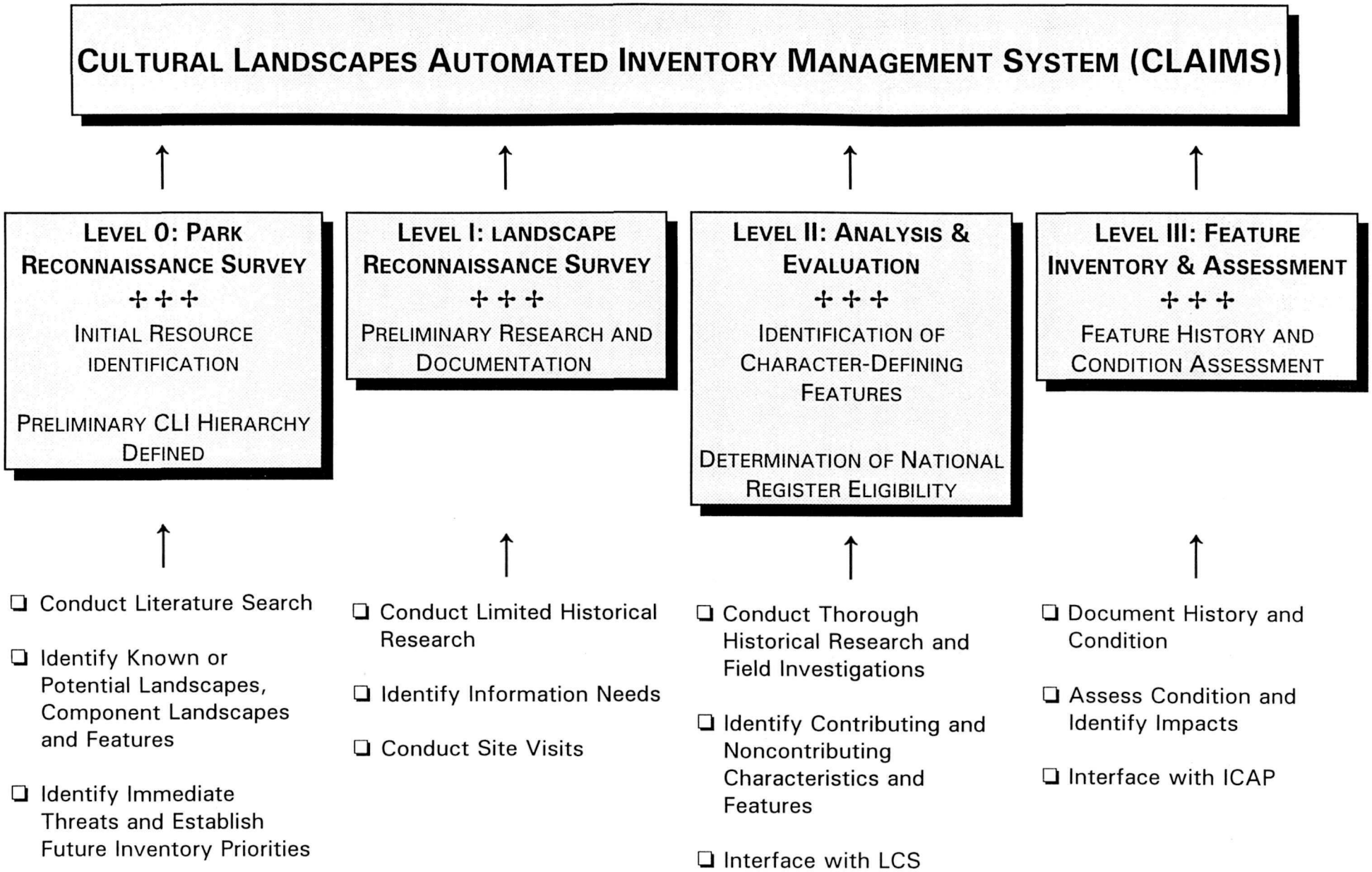
INTRODUCTION

One of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program involves a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system. Since the 1960s, the NPS has undertaken Servicewide inventories of cultural resources, such as historic structures (which today includes over 16,000 structures). However, in light of the recent recognition of cultural landscapes and the nascent stage of the Park Cultural Landscapes Program, an inventory of cultural landscapes has not been undertaken. As a result, the extent and condition of these resources in the system are unknown. To address this lack of information, in 1992 a three year initiation was commenced to design and field test an inventory methodology for cultural landscapes with the assistance of professionals throughout the NPS. As envisioned, the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) will be an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest.

The CLI will provide a management inventory of evaluated cultural landscapes, as per Section 110(a)(1) of the National Historic Preservation Act, *NPS Management Policies* and *Cultural Resource Management Guideline, NPS-28.* Additionally, the initiation of the CLI is a critical step in establishing "a scientific/scholarly basis for resource management decisions," one of the primary goals identified in the *National Park Service Strategic Plan.* Specifically, the plan identifies a desired condition in which "A cultural landscapes data base provides information about the location, historical development, and current management of cultural landscapes." As such, the CLI will assist managers in planning, programming, and recording treatment and management decisions.

The range and diversity of cultural landscapes in the system presents the greatest challenge to the development of a standardized inventory. For example, the landscape of the Stehekin River Valley in North Cascades National Park, with its homesteads and old U.S. Forest Service ranger district complexes, differs greatly from the formal estate at Vanderbilt National Historic Site in New York. The character of both are in contrast to the Presidio military complex in Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the chain of missions along the San Antonio River which constitutes San Antonio Missions National Historical Park in Texas. Additionally, there is a lack of baseline data and contextual information for cultural landscapes which can present difficulties in determining the significance of these resources. Therefore, the CLI must provide the flexibility to address the diverse landscapes in the system, recognize the lack of basic information which exists, and provide the ability to serve as a tool for defining programmatic needs.

Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) Process



THE CLI INVENTORY PROCESS

As presently outlined, based on three years of design development and testing, the CLI inventory process includes four levels: **Level 0: Park Reconnaissance Survey**, **Level I: Landscape Reconnaissance Survey**, **Level II: Analysis and Evaluation** and **Level III: Feature Inventory and Assessment**. This four level process has been defined in order to facilitate identifying the potential scope of cultural landscapes in a systematic manner, establishing priorities for further inventory and research and responding to specific park management needs. Each level corresponds to a specific degree of effort and detail contained in the inventory. Information from all four levels will be included in a computer database to provide an automated system for sharing and reporting on the voluminous and diverse material collected in the CLI.

The four levels include:

- **Level 0: Park Reconnaissance Survey** is used for identifying the scope of cultural landscapes in a particular park, identifying what is known about the resources and what are the information needs, identifying immediate threats and establishing priorities for Level I and II inventory.

- **Level I: Landscape Reconnaissance Survey** is used for identifying what is known about a specific cultural landscape in a park and what are the information needs and establishing priorities for Level II inventory.

- **Level II: Analysis and Evaluation** is used for defining the landscape characteristics, and their associated features, of a particular cultural landscape. Based on an analysis and evaluation of the landscape, the National Register eligibility of the landscape is decided, if undetermined. Additionally, priorities are established for Level III inventory and the preparation of cultural landscape reports.

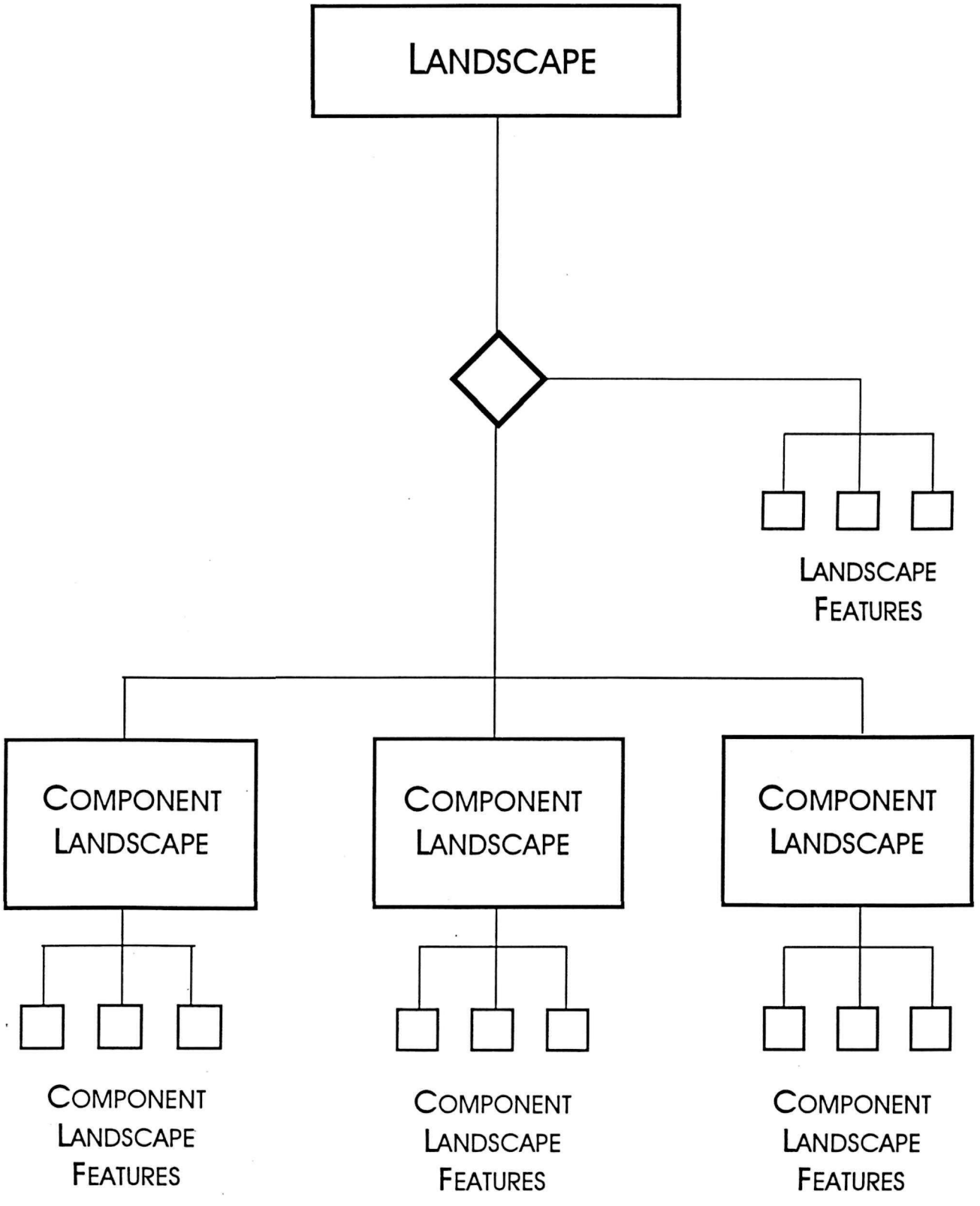
- **Level III: Feature Inventory and Assessment** is used for inventorying and evaluating the physical features identified in Level II as contributing to the significance of a particular cultural landscape, assessing their condition and assigning costs associated with treatment.

Level I and II are completed for each **landscape** eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and each **component landscape** either individually eligible or contributing to a larger property. Level III forms are completed for the physical **features** which contribute to the significance of both.

As the inventory process proceeds from Level 0 to III, additional information is collected and prior information acquired is refined. The relationship between Level I and II is very direct---the CLI is not considered finished until Level II has been fully completed. Level III provides feature specific information which supplements, but generally does not alter, the information contained in a Level II inventory.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY (CLI)

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE HIERARCHY



THE HIERARCHY FOR INVENTORYING CULTURAL LANDSCAPES IN THE CLI

The diversity of cultural landscapes in the national park system, both in terms of scale and physical complexity, also presents a significant challenge for a standardized inventory. Based on this diversity and the need to clearly articulate the physical character of the landscape for the purposes of the CLI, and ultimately for management, a hierarchy has been defined for subdividing a landscape into identifiable components and/or features. The following three categories have been selected to delineate a cultural landscape for inventory purposes:

Landscape: The *landscape* is the primary focus of the CLI. It is the aggregate of sites or features that define a cultural landscape which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (As a site or district). Examples may include Gettysburg National Military Park, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Cades Cove Historic District (Great Smoky Mountains NP), Dungeness Historic District (Cumberland Island NS), Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site and Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.

Component Landscape: A definable physical component of a *landscape* that contributes to the significance of a National Register property or, in some cases, is individually eligible for the National Register. A *component landscape* can be further subdivided into smaller features and warrants individual documentation to adequately record the physical character of the property. Examples may include a garden, canyon, overlook, cemetery, campground, cave, farmstead and a memorial road system.

Feature: The smallest physical unit that contributes to the significance of a *landscape* or *component landscape* and can be managed as an individual element. Examples may include a woodlot, earthwork hedge, lawn, specimen tree, allee, barn, agricultural field, and vista.

The application of these categories to a particular landscape is contingent upon its character and complexity. The following two examples serve to illustrate this point. At Harry S Truman National Historic Site, the CLI would identify the 1.4 acre property as the *landscape* and specific attributes, such as the rose garden, outbuildings, fencing, and foundation plantings, would be identified as *features*. In a more complex park, such as Gettysburg National Military Park, the CLI would identify the 3,965 acre park as the *landscape*, within which are several *component landscapes*, including several farmsteads, a national cemetery, and a memorial road system. Additionally, the *features* associated with the *landscape* and each *component landscape* would be identified.

To date, over 500 cultural landscapes have been inventoried at some level based on the methodology described above. Based on the design development and field testing during the past three years, the process and hierarchy associated with the CLI, and the identification of the information to be collected, the CLI will be automated using a modern relational database management system. To date, the information requirements, system design, and prototyping of the system has been completed. System programming is being finalized and Servicewide training and implementation is scheduled for FY 1997.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Briefing Statement

Subject: **Cultural Landscapes Inventory Initiation**

Status: Until recently, an inventory of cultural landscapes in the national park system had not been initiated, which hindered budget, planning, and management efforts necessary for the protection and preservation of cultural landscapes. In FY 1992, the NPS commenced a three year initiation to design and field test an inventory methodology for cultural landscapes with the assistance of six regional offices. As envisioned, the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) will be an evaluated inventory of all cultural landscapes having historical significance in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest, paralleling other Servicewide inventories of cultural resources.

The CLI will provide a management inventory of evaluated cultural landscapes, as per Section 110(a)(1) of the National Historic Preservation Act, *Management Policies*, and *Cultural Resource Management Guideline, NPS-28*. Additionally, the initiation of the CLI is a critical element in achieving the mission and long-term goals of the *National Park Service Strategic Plan (Final Draft)*. As such, the CLI will assist managers in planning, programming, and recording treatment and management decisions.

As presently outlined, based on three years of design development and testing, the inventory process includes four levels: Level O: Park Reconnaissance Survey, Level I: Landscape Reconnaissance Survey, Level II: Analysis and Evaluation, and Level III: Feature Inventory and Assessment. A four level process has been defined in order to facilitate identifying the potential scope of cultural landscapes in a systematic manner, establishing priorities for further inventory and research, and responding to specific park management needs. The four levels correspond to a varying degree of effort and detail contained in the inventory. In FY 1996, a *Draft CLI Procedural Guidance Manual* was developed outlining a systematic and standardized approach to inventory cultural landscapes in the national park system. To date, over 500 cultural landscapes have been inventoried at some level based on a defined methodology. Approximately $2.3 million has been allocated to the CLI development since FY 1992, 67% provided by the Washington office and 33% provided by the regions.

Information associated with the CLI will be automated to provide an analytical tool for assessing significance, impacts, condition, treatment, and legal responsibilities associated with cultural landscapes. In FY 1996, an *Information Requirements and System Design Study* was completed for the CLI to validate and verify the findings of three years of design development and determine alternatives for automating and implementing the CLI Servicewide. Based on the study, *Microsoft Access* was selected as the desktop database management system for the CLI and the Cultural Landscapes Automated Inventory System (CLAIMS) was developed. Currently, the software is being beta tested in two Field Areas.

The goals for FY 1997 are to (1) finalize the *CLI Procedural Guidance Manual*, (2) initiate the CLI in all Field Areas, (3) finalize the development of CLAIMS and distribute it to clusters with data entry needs, and (5) provide training for both the procedural and database aspects of the CLI.