

**NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA
FEASIBILITY STUDY GUIDELINES**



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

2019

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY GUIDELINES

I. INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service (NPS) has been increasingly called upon by Congress to conduct feasibility studies on discreet areas throughout the Nation that may be candidates for National Heritage Area (NHA) designation. This is an update to the 2003 NPS guidance document and management policies for undertaking NHA feasibility studies available for reference by NPS personnel or others performing such studies. These guidelines provide a suggested methodology, including basic steps or areas of inquiry, that make up a comprehensive NHA feasibility study; how to apply NHA criteria; an outline of a typical NHA feasibility study report; and, appendices containing helpful hints on sources of information, public involvement techniques, and other factors.

National Heritage Area Feasibility Studies Can Be Initiated In Four Different Ways:

1. The 1998 Omnibus Parks Management Act (Public Law 105-391) establishes certain requirements for studies of areas for potential addition to the National Park System. Similar requirements are established by law for studies of Wild and Scenic Rivers and additions to the National Trail System. Studies of new units of the National Park System, Wild and Scenic River System and National Trail system can only be initiated if authorized by Congress. The potential for national heritage area designation might be evaluated as an alternative in one of these congressionally authorized studies. Chapter 1 of Management Policies and special directive 92-11 guide studies of potential new NPS units.
2. Congress can specifically authorized studies of potential new heritage areas through the legislative process independently from any consideration of creating a new unit of the National Park System, National Trails System, or Wild and Scenic River System.
3. Congress has directed funding from the NPS budget to studies of potential heritage areas without any specific authorization. Technical assistance projects supported by the National Park Service may evolve into a study of an area's potential as a NHA, also without any specific authorization from Congress.
4. Local sponsors have undertaken a number of NHA feasibility studies, either as part of a state sponsored heritage initiative or because a local management entity desires to seek NHA designation by Congress. NPS then reviews the locally sponsored feasibility study to determine if the candidate area qualifies for national designation.

These guidelines are designed to help understand the process and content of NHA feasibility studies regardless of whether the study is congressionally authorized and conducted by the NPS or undertaken by local sponsors. A first step in any study process undertaken by NPS personnel, of course, should be to review the legislative history on how it was authorized or directed.

These guidelines are offered with the understanding that each study may involve unique resource and public involvement issues and each region may present different study opportunities and constraints. Flexibility in the use of the guidelines is assumed throughout the following discussion. Study team members may also find that altering the sequence of the study steps better serves their purposes.

II. NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA DEFINITION, DESIGNATION STEPS AND FEASIBILITY STUDY CRITERIA

On October 26, 1999, in testimony before the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, House Resources Committee, the NPS articulated its definition of a NHA, the steps to be completed prior to designation, and 10 criteria to permit the NPS, Congress and the public to evaluate candidate areas. The NPS definition provides that:

A National Heritage Area is a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in them. Continued use of National Heritage Areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their Significance.

The term *nationally distinctive landscape* has not been further defined, but should be understood to include places that are characterized by unique cultures, nationally important events, and historic demographic and economic trends and social movements, among others. They are places that by their resource and cultural values and the contributions of people and events have had substantial impact on the formation of our national story. The term is not synonymous with the normal NPS definition of *national significance* except that a *nationally distinctive landscape* may contain *nationally significant resources*, e.g., units of the National Park System, National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) and National Natural Landmarks (NNLs). To become a NHA and to warrant NPS involvement, there should be a determination on the part of the study team that clearly identifiable and important characteristics of national heritage value exist in the study area.

It is recommended that the study team consider using a round table of experts, knowledgeable in the resources and stories of the study area and comparable landscapes, such as State Historic Preservation Office staff, Tribal Historic Preservation Office staff, Academics, local historians, and local NPS Park staff, to assist in determining how the potential NHA ranks among these related resources and stories. The round table findings can assist greatly in, and provide documentation for, the determination of national distinctiveness. Appendix 1 provides examples of what may constitute nationally distinctive landscapes.

The testimony continued:

The focus is on the protection and conservation of critical resources; the natural, cultural, scenic, and historic resources that have shaped us as a nation and as communities.

In national parks, it is primarily the responsibility of the National Park Service to ensure that the resources that the Congress has recognized as being important to our nation's heritage are protected, interpreted and preserved. In heritage areas it is the responsibility of the people living within a heritage area to ensure that the heritage area's resources are protected, interpreted and preserved and it is the National Park Service's responsibility to assist them in that endeavor.

Our experience working with heritage areas around the country has led us to the recognition that the people who live on the land are uniquely qualified to protect it. Heritage area designations provide significant opportunities to encourage citizens, local businesses and organizations, and local governments to work together to foster a greater sense of community, to reward community pride, and to care for their land and culture. As Aldo Leopold once said, 'When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.' Heritage areas provide the opportunity to pass on the knowledge and culture of the past to the future. As Loren Eiseley said, 'Without the past, the pursued future has no meaning.' By creating this bond with the next generation, heritage areas will be insuring their continued support into the future.

The conservation of resources through local initiative has shaped our thoughts on heritage areas and how best to identify, designate and then support them. Probably the most important work that goes on in a heritage area is the organizing that goes on at the beginning of the process. The recognition of important local resources, the determination of a community's unique story, the formulation of a plan involving all parts of a community in how best to protect those resources and to carry on a community's heritage through each generation are the difficult tasks. These are arduous and time-consuming activities, but our experience tells us that through them there are created strong local commitments to the conservation of a community's heritage and its unique resources that help to define communities and result in vital, thriving communities.

The testimony stresses that the NPS views a NHA, first and foremost, as a vehicle for *locally initiated protection and interpretation* of natural, cultural, scenic and historic resources. While the NPS assists in this effort (primarily through financial and technical assistance), local partnerships are responsible for planning and carrying out the strategies and specific tasks to achieve successful resource protection and interpretation. The testimony also indicates that much of the important work is the organizing that goes on at the beginning of the process.

In many cases, the feasibility study is a part of the organizing influence that begins the process. As such, these studies are quite different from others normally conducted by the NPS. They require an understanding on the part of the study team that they are interacting in a wider community environment. Pivotal decisions relating to NHA designation rest on the support, commitment and capacity of those in the community that will be responsible for undertaking and implementing a heritage area management plan. Providing the opportunity for the articulation of local visions and suggestions of how heritage area programming may best be implemented provides opportunities for the community to better understand the role of a heritage area. This is a critical element in assisting the study team to measure the potential for local support, capacity, commitment, and ultimately, NHA feasibility

Four steps are necessary before the Department of the Interior makes findings and recommendations to Congress through requested testimony at a hearing regarding designation of a region as a NHA:

1. *completion of a feasibility study;*
2. *public involvement in the feasibility study;*
3. *demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed designation; and*
4. *commitment to the proposal from the appropriate players which may include governments, industry, and private, non-profit organizations, in addition to the local citizenry.*

Three of the four steps carry strong implications that a NHA Feasibility Study entails a level of public engagement by the study team well beyond the minimum National Environmental Policy Act requirements usually associated with a Special Resource Study or a NPS unit General Management Plan. Because there will often be considerable public interest surrounding the potential for NHA designation, public desire to participate in the study process, or even the necessity by the study team to actively seek out potentially important players, public involvement strategies and techniques require careful pre-study planning.

The NPS has ten criteria for evaluation of candidate areas by the NPS, Congress and the public:

1. *An area has an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed as such an assemblage through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;*

2. *Reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story;*
3. *Provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and /or scenic features;*
4. *Provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;*
5. *The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;*
6. *Residents, business interests, non-profit organizations, and governments within the proposed area are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants including the federal government, and have demonstrated support for designation of the area;*
7. *The proposed management entity and units of government supporting the designation are willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area;*
8. *The proposal is consistent with continued economic activity in the area;*
9. *A conceptual boundary map is supported by the public; and*
10. *The management entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described.*

The NPS uses these criteria to evaluate potential areas and has referenced them in subsequent testimony before congressional authorizing committees regarding legislation proposing designation of specific national heritage areas.

III. SUGGESTED STEPS IN A NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY

The steps described below should be sufficient to undertake a comprehensive NHA feasibility study by NPS personnel. They are also encouraged for use in feasibility studies undertaken by local organizations seeking National Heritage Area designation. The study team should feel free to reorder the steps to best fit the circumstances of the study.

NHA feasibility studies conducted by the NPS are subject to the compliance requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The NPS guidance for addressing NEPA is set forth in Director's Order 12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*, which outlines several options for meeting NEPA, depending on the severity of the environmental impacts of the alternatives.

A “categorical exclusion for which no formal documentation is necessary” is the most appropriate NEPA pathway for NPS led feasibility studies. Feasibility studies are excluded from requiring an environmental assessment because they match one of the categories that under normal circumstances has no potential for impacts to the human environment. The categorical exclusion selected states:

“Legislative proposals of an administrative or technical nature (including such things as changes in authorizations for appropriations and minor boundary changes and land title transactions) or having primarily economic, social, individual, or institutional effects; and comments and reports on referrals of legislative proposals” (NPS 2015).

NPS led feasibility studies are consistent with this categorical exclusion because they are directed by Congress to determine if an area meets the feasibility requirement for designation as a national heritage area. In this case, a feasibility study is a report on a legislative proposal. If Congress decides to designate the feasibility study area as a national heritage area, then a comprehensive management plan would be developed for the area. Depending on the types of projects, programs, and other actions proposed in that management plan, an environmental assessment may be necessary at that time.

The categorical exclusion selected for NPS led NHA feasibility studies requires no formal documentation; however, both NPS led and locally sponsored studies still contain several key NEPA components. Principally, a feasibility study relies heavily on public input and engagement of local stakeholders and subject matter experts to support its findings.

Because at this stage in the evolution of a heritage area specific programs and projects may not be known, a note should be included in the study that additional NEPA compliance and Section 106 compliance work will be required not only for a heritage area management plan for the region, but also for all future projects requiring federal funding.

A. Step 1 – Defining the Study Area

The area within which the study is to be undertaken is most often specified by the congressional authorization. In some cases, however, the authorization may refer only to a general region. Studies sponsored by local interests may also require careful thought of a study area.

Where the study area is not specified or apparent at the beginning of the study, a process for determining an appropriate region needs to be developed by the study team. The objective of the process should be to identify natural, cultural and/or political limits that best encompass important resources related to the history of the region and potential themes that may be identified. Public involvement in delineating the study area can be of important assistance and serve to promote future public acceptance and support for potential heritage area boundary alternatives proposed in the study (Criterion 9).

B. Step 2 – Public Involvement Strategy

As stated previously, the criteria used for a NHA feasibility study imply significant levels of public engagement. If a local organization has already been formed to promote national heritage area designation and enjoys the support of local governments, business interests, organizations and the general public, the public involvement strategy may be designed to capitalize on its existence and public acceptance. Such organizations can be helpful in identifying contacts, supplying existing data and often, are willing to arrange and sponsor public meetings and workshops during the course of the study.

An effective public involvement strategy is based on the assumption that a successful NHA study can only be achieved with the active participation of affected interests in the region. Indeed, the criteria require findings of public support and commitment to heritage area designation. The objectives of a public involvement strategy should normally include:

1. promotion of public understanding of the study and its components;
2. maximization of participation and contributions of interested and affected governments, organizations and individuals in the study process; and
3. assessment of public support for designation, and local capacity and commitments to successfully undertake heritage area resource protection and programming.

Elements of the strategy may include a process for identifying stakeholders, extensive individual and organizational outreach, workshops and meetings, written materials (meeting handouts, brochures, newsletters, and press releases), a web site, social media, and the use of surrogate methods (e.g. asking other organizations, web sites and publications to inform the public of the study, request information on historical research, resources that exist within the study area and potential themes that may be considered, etc.). Workshops and charrettes are particularly useful in permitting the public to assist in the identification of regional resources, potential heritage area themes and in creating their own vision of the region's future. Appendix 2 provides sources of information on public involvement strategies and techniques that can be adapted for NHA study purposes.

Public workshops associated with the conduct of a NHA feasibility study often provide an opportunity for the NPS to facilitate a regional or community vision of a NHA. Visioning workshops are a vehicle to bring interested publics together to discuss and describe desirable futures and the roles that each may play in their achievement. Visioning workshops are useful, too, in promoting an understanding of how resource protection, interpretation and economic development may be compatibly undertaken. The process better permits the public to determine if a NHA designation would be useful in achieving community goals and to understand what actually occurs in a NHA.

C. Step 3 – Determination of the Region's Contribution to the National Heritage and Development of Potential Themes

NHAs, by definition, are places *representative of the national experience*. They are regions that have contributed in substantial ways to our national heritage. Most often, the authorizing legislation for the study will include findings about these contributions. When a locally sponsored study, the study team will need to explore these contributions.

The study team should assemble historical information about the region and understand the contributions of the study area and its people and events to the national story. These have varied considerably among existing heritage areas. Some represent specific historic events leading to the formation and development of our nation, or early industrial or technological achievements that fashioned today's society. Some are based on specific cultural groups in a given region. Others celebrate important landscapes that were the focus of literature, art and social experimentation. Famous persons are often honored, as well as the contributions of immigrants, early settlers, woman, labor, African Americans, Native Americans and others whose experiences and contributions are important for understanding the nation's heritage.

By first determining the region's contributions to our national heritage, the study team may better focus its work on identifying the natural and cultural resources associated with those contributions and the themes that may best enable the public to understand, appreciate and celebrate their importance. One potential element in determining if a region contributes to the national heritage is the presence of a related National Park

System unit (National Park, National Trail or Wild and Scenic River), and National Historic Landmarks and National Natural Landmarks within the study area.

Most often, knowledgeable experts and the public are able to contribute significant information to the study team about source materials and persons familiar with the history of the region, events of importance, historical figures and the contributions of various communities. Tapping into and synthesizing this knowledge is a key to capturing the true picture of the region's contributions and the community's view of its shared heritage. A round table of experts can assist the study team in evaluating the role and importance of the region as it relates to comparable landscapes in other parts of the country and potential stories that may constitute viable themes.

The study team should also ascertain information about traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life that characterize the region (criterion 2). The traditions, customs and beliefs may or may not exist in today's society. Many that don't are celebrated by local festivals, exhibits and through other commemorative events. Identifying the ways in which these important aspects of heritage are still evident, shared, or celebrated through commemoration are necessary elements in understanding the region's history and contributions. The analysis should assist the team in discovering whom in the community shares a common culture that is important to the region's story and if it continues to the present day.

Themes are the organizing framework within which interpretation of related natural and cultural resources is conducted. They are the bridges to increased public understanding of the importance of the region and its theme-related resources. NHA themes are derived from analyses of the region's contributions to our national heritage. They represent the broad stories that integrate the collection of individual resources so that they may be viewed within the context of the whole.

A good NHA theme structure enables residents and visitors to understand the region's overall contributions to our national heritage and the elements that enabled them to occur. The elements may include, among many other factors, natural and cultural resources, important events or decisions and the roles of specific places, people, social movements, beliefs, folkways and traditions.

The study team should understand that themes developed during the NHA feasibility study may not be fully carried into a future heritage area management plan completed by a local management entity. The purpose of theme development for the study is to determine that a viable theme structure exists in the study area. Careful consideration of themes and a public process for developing them during the study will assist local interests in later theme related planning if NHA designation results. Researching the broad array of stories and resources connected with them is also critical to the later development of potential NHA boundaries.

D. Step 4 - Natural and Cultural Resources Inventories, Integrity Determinations, and Affected Environment Data

The determination of a *nationally distinctive landscape* is partially dependent on the evaluation of resources existing within the study area. Conducting a carefully planned natural and cultural resources inventory not only provides a basis for measurement, it leads to a better understanding of how NHA designation may contribute to additional public education and protection of a region's resource base. The key is to focus the inventory process on producing the results necessary for the study's purposes. There are generally three purposes for the inventory:

1. to assist in assessing whether the region is a *nationally distinctive landscape* (criterion 1);
2. to assess whether there are resources important to the identified themes and if they retain integrity for interpretive purposes (criterion 5);
3. to determine if there are outstanding opportunities for conservation, recreation and education (criteria 3&4)

Since the study being conducted is one investigating the feasibility of NHA designation, an exhaustive resource inventory may not be necessary for the second objective. Criterion 5 calls for the determination that *resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation*. The study team should focus on identifying a strategic assemblage of natural and cultural resources that relates to the identified themes. It is these resources for which integrity assessments should be made. While many additional theme-related resources may be identified, the feasibility study needs to find only that there is a sufficient assemblage with integrity to provide a viable interpretive experience. The NPS and State Historic Preservation Offices, as well as state and local agencies and organizations, have inventories of cultural and natural resources that may assist greatly in the investigation. Refer to the National Historic Landmarks listing, National Register of Historic Places, State registries, and National Natural Landmarks listings, to name a few.

In addition to natural and cultural resources, information necessary to assess *outstanding opportunities for conservation, recreation and education* (criteria 3&4) should include an analysis of existing public and publicly accessible private open space, recreation and heritage education resources, and whether there are potential opportunities to increase the level and quality of such resources through heritage area designation.

For both NPS led and locally sponsored studies, additional information may need to be collected by the study team to enable the completion of the criteria analysis. These should include at minimum, additional information on:

1. population and socio-economic conditions;
2. land use and transportation;

3. tourism, business and industry; and
4. air and water quality.

Through the review of the affected environment, the study team should identify necessary information enabling a determination that heritage area designation will be *consistent with continued economic activity* (criterion 8).

E. Step 5 – Management Alternatives And Preliminary Assessment of Impacts

Within an NPS Special Resource Study, NHA designation may be a management alternative to the designation of a unit of the National Park System and be evaluated for its feasibility using these guidelines. If the study is authorized by Congress as an NHA feasibility study, or is undertaken by a local sponsor without congressional authorization, this step should include management alternatives to NHA designation.

At least two management alternatives should be analyzed. The first is the “no action/use of existing authorities alternative.” It is the continuation of the status quo with references to any known changes that may occur including any state or local initiatives that may affect the region. A preliminary analysis of the positive and negative impacts of this alternative should be included.

The second management alternative is NHA designation. The preliminary analysis of this alternative should include a description of the likely increases in funding and potentials for resource protection, interpretive programming and other positive or negative results of designation. The experiences of other NHAs may be used to comparatively illustrate potential results and impacts.

Depending on its feasibility, a third management alternative might describe the potential for local or state operation of a heritage area, independent of a federal NHA designation. In this alternative, there should be a description of likely funding sources and potential for resource protection, interpretive programming and other potential outcomes under state or local administration. An analysis of impacts should be included.

Additional alternatives may be explored as relevant to the study and region. These could include other types of heritage partnerships, trails, or other NPS assisted or unassisted endeavors. All management alternatives presented, of course, must be feasible to implement and their impacts described.

F. Step 6 - Boundary Delineations

Prospective heritage area boundaries should include resources with integrity (determined in Step 4) that have important relationships to the potential themes developed in Step 3. All resources related to the themes in the study area need not be included within a proposed boundary. A strategic or representative assemblage that enables

residents and visitors to fully understand how the region has contributed to the national story and that offers opportunities for additional resource protection is a desirable result. Boundary alternatives may be developed that provide (1) the core resources necessary for a successful heritage area or (2) the core plus additional resources that may significantly add to public understanding and foster additional opportunities for resource protection. Criterion 9 provides that *a conceptual boundary is supported by the public*. As with other aspects of the study, public involvement in the delineation and evaluation of alternative boundaries can be an important element in this determination.

It is important that the study team views the process of delineating boundary alternatives as being responsive to the research undertaken to develop potential themes in Step 3 and the resource based inquiry undertaken in Step 4. Boundary alternatives should be justified on the quantity and quality of resources that are integral to the interpretation of themes, community vision of the region's desired future, and opportunities for increased resource protection.

G. Step 7 – Heritage Area Administration and Financial Feasibility

Criterion 10 provides that the *management entity* for the potential NHA be described. Management entities for NHAs have included nonprofit organizations, federal commissions and state agencies or public corporations. In any structure analyzed, the study team should ensure that the entity is representative of the varied interests in the potential heritage area including natural and cultural resources organizations, governments, businesses and industries, recreational organizations and others that may be affected by heritage area plans and programs. Where a local heritage area organization has not been previously formed, the study team will need to include a strategy to ascertain whether any existing organizations are interested in becoming the local management entity and the level of public support they may receive. The study team may need to facilitate discussions to ascertain the feasibility of the creation of a new organization for this purpose if a ready candidate is not in place.

A conceptual financial plan outlining the roles for all participants (criterion 6) should also be devised. The financial plan should demonstrate, at a minimum, the ability of the management entity to meet federal matching requirements that may become available upon NHA designation. The team should also assess capabilities of the management entity to leverage federal funding with other potential financial resources. It is recognized that the latter resources may not be able to be specifically identified during the study. What may be gauged is the past or potential capacity and creativity of the management entity to attract additional financial support. A five-year conceptual financial plan is suggested. The plan should, if possible, include estimates of funds to be made available by the management entity, state or local contributions, and potential funding by private interests (foundations, corporations and other organizations). The study team should be cognizant of any state sponsored assistance programs for heritage areas, regional projects and/or heritage tourism grants that may be investigated as potential funding sources.

NHA management entities often use a portion of their federal funding to make matching grants to local organizations. The portion of federal funds anticipated to be used for

grants should be estimated, as well as any corresponding matching funds to be provided by grantees. A sample of a conceptual financial plan revenue chart is presented in Appendix 3.

Estimating expenditures for a potential NHA is not a necessary inclusion in a feasibility study. At this stage in the evolution of a heritage area, how funds will be specifically expended may not be known. Such figures are more appropriately contained in a heritage area management plan. If the potential management entity has developed preliminary expense projections they should, of course, be portrayed in the study.

H. Step 8 – Evaluation of Public Support and Commitments

Since NHAs are locally controlled, planned, and implemented, the study team's evaluation of public support for designation (criterion 6) and commitments to partnerships within the study area (criterion 7) are critical to the feasibility analysis. Findings of public support or opposition can be derived from comments at public meetings, letters from individuals and organizations, resolutions from governing bodies, and actual evidence of formal commitments by local governments and others to participate in heritage area planning and programming.

Partnership commitments demonstrate, in large part, the capacity of the local participants to undertake and implement a future NHA. They may be agreements for working relationships, financial contributions, or pledges of other types of assistance. As in the case of the conceptual financial plan, specific commitments may be difficult to ascertain during the study. Indications of commitments to assist and work in partnership with the management entity by state and local governments and other organizations may be substituted for actual dollar or other specific contributions. The study team should, however, attempt to ascertain tangible commitments that partners are willing to contribute to the successful implementation of the heritage area. A sample way to portray commitments to the partnership is presented in Appendix 4.

IV. SAMPLE REPORT OUTLINE

The following outline is intended as an example to demonstrate how the various study steps may be integrated into a NHA feasibility study report and to analyze if a heritage area vision, mission and goals are attainable. Study teams will need to design their own report formats based on the level of information available and the manner which best portrays the viability of a potential NHA.

- A. Executive Summary** – The summary should include a concise description of the study, including a discussion on why the area has been judged to be nationally distinctive, and a conclusion as to whether the ten criteria for NHA designation have or have not been met. It should specify any supplemental steps to be taken that will permit any criterion to be met.
- B. Chapter 1: Introduction** – The introduction should include the following:

- **Purpose of the Study** including reference to the authorizing legislation (if applicable);
 - **The Study Process** including the methodologies used to develop the study scope;
 - **Description of the Study Area;**
 - **Public Involvement Strategies;**
 - **Coordination With Concurrent Studies and Efforts** including other NPS and state or local initiatives within the study area; and
 - **Steps to Be Undertaken at the Conclusion of the Study** including public review requirements, transmittal of the study to Congress by the Secretary of the Interior and the need for designating legislation.
- C. Chapter 2: Study Area History and Contributions** – The chapter should describe the events, people, places or other factors (including the results of any expert round table discussions) that result in the conclusion that the region is a nationally distinctive landscape that contributes substantially to our national heritage. The chapter utilizes information developed in Step 3.
- D. Chapter 3: Themes** – The chapter should describe the process for developing potential themes and discuss the selected themes and any associated sub-themes. The chapter utilizes information developed in Step 3.
- E. Chapter 4: Affected Environment** – The chapter should include information from the natural and cultural resources inventories and other data included in Step 4. Maps should also be included here.
- F. Chapter 5: Management Alternatives** – This chapter sets forth NHA designation and other potential management alternatives including alternative boundary delineations. The chapter utilizes information developed in Steps 5 and 6.
- G. Chapter 6: Application of National Heritage Area Criteria** – This chapter discusses each criterion and evaluates the potential for heritage area designation. The chapter draws upon the information set forth in previous chapters, particularly chapters 2, 3 and 4 with additional information developed in Study Steps 7 and 8 regarding the proposed management entity and evidence of public support and local commitments.
- H. Chapter 7: Vision Statement** – If a visioning process has been included in the study as a vehicle for public engagement, a suggested heritage area vision should be presented.
- I. Chapter 8: Impact Assessment** – This chapter describes the anticipated impacts related to the various management alternatives and any boundary alternatives that

may be contained in the study. It should address potential impacts of identified alternatives, including “no action” on the elements described in Chapter 4 – Affected Environment.

- J. Appendices** – Appendices should include necessary consultation documents, and sources of positive and negative public comments. It may also include charts representing data gathered during the study, e.g., a matrix of NHL and National Register Sites with integrity ratings, public accessibility, ownership, lists of municipalities represented in boundary alternatives, literature or other references consulted, and other useful information to further inform the public.

APPENDIX 1

EXAMPLES OF NATIONALLY DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPES

Nationally distinctive landscapes are places that contain important regional and national stories that, together with their associated natural and/or cultural resources, enable the American people to understand, preserve and celebrate key components of the multi-faceted character of the Nation's heritage. The landscapes are often places that represent and contain identifiable assemblages of resources with integrity associated with one or more of the following:

- 1. important historical periods of the Nation and its people;**
- 2. major events, persons and groups that contributed substantively to the Nation's history, customs, beliefs, and folklore;**
- 3. distinctive cultures and cultural mores;**
- 4. major industries and technological, business and manufacturing innovations/practices, and labor advancements that contributed substantively to the economic growth of the Nation and the well-being of its people;**
- 5. transportation innovations and routes that played central roles in important military actions, settlement, migration, and commerce;**
- 6. social movements that substantively influenced past and present day society;**
- 7. American art, crafts, literature and music;**
- 8. distinctive architecture and architectural periods and movements;**
- 9. major scientific discoveries and advancements; and**
- 10. other comparable representations that together with their associated resources substantively contributed to the Nation's heritage.**

APPENDIX 2

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Members of the Study Team should consult Director's Order 75A which provides guidance on NPS policies relating to civic engagement and public involvement. This Director's Order contains a number of helpful web sites containing information on public involvement strategies and techniques.

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) staff members are skilled in a variety of public involvement and community visioning techniques. The study team should consider enlisting RTCA staff assistance in designing the proposed public involvement strategy for a NHA feasibility study. If possible, the team should consider involvement of RTCA staff in the various public meetings and forums conducted during the study. The NPS Denver Service Center has also developed a public involvement model that may be consulted.

Director's Order 75A contains a number of useful resources that may assist in devising strategies and techniques for public involvement in a NHA feasibility study including:

(This list is provided for the convenience of readers. Web links may change or become obsolete).

NPS Sources

National Park Service Civic Engagement Resources:
<https://www.nps.gov/civic/resources/index.html>

Visitor Experience and Resource Protection handbook (U.S. Department of the Interior 1997):
<http://obpa-nc.org/DOI-AdminRecord/0048953-0049060.pdf>

NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Programs Community Toolboxes:
<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/resources.htm>

Other DOI Bureau Sources

A Handbook for Outreach, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
2001 [https://digitalmedia.fws.gov/digital/collection/document/
id/70](https://digitalmedia.fws.gov/digital/collection/document/id/70)

Other Federal Sources

EPA's Public Participation Guide: [https://www.epa.gov/
international-cooperation/public-participation-guide](https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide)

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation:
[https://www.achp.gov/digital-library-section-106-landing/
citizens-guide-section-106-reviewNon](https://www.achp.gov/digital-library-section-106-landing/citizens-guide-section-106-reviewNon)

Non-Federal Sources

International Association for Public Participation
www.iap2.org

International Association of Facilitators
www.iaf-world.org

Oregon Conservation and Land Development Agency's policy:
<https://www.oregon.gov/LCD/pages/index.aspx>

APPENDIX 3

**SAMPLE PORTRAYAL OF MANAGEMENT ENTITY FINANCIAL
CAPABILITY FOR STUDY COMPONENT 7**

The sample portrayal of financial capability provides an estimate of anticipated federal funding over a 5-year period and potential sources of local matching contributions. While contemporary NHA legislation provides federal funding authorizations of up to \$1 million a year over a 15-year period with a required 50:50 non-federal match to any federal funds from this program, newly designated NHAs rarely receive \$1 million in the first few years. The sample portrays anticipated federal funding below the maximum authorization and based off of an NHA receiving ~\$150,000 in federal funds for years 1-3 and then ~\$300,00 for years 4-5, after the approval of a Management Plan.

Five Year Revenue Projection

Total Revenues - \$2,100,000

Revenues in Each Column May be Adjusted Upward or Downward Based on Actual
Federal Appropriations

Anticipated Federal Appropriations	Anticipated State and Local Contributions (Match)	Grantee Matching Requirement for \$500,000 in Management Entity Sub-Grants to other Organizations (Match)	Other Private Grants, Donations, and Miscellaneous Income (Match)
\$1,050,000	\$300,000	\$500,000	\$250,000

The study team should provide explanations in the study setting forth it’s reasoning on how estimates on anticipated state and local contributions, as well as other private grants, donations and miscellaneous income were determined. Specific financial commitments, if known should be identified. Where specific commitments cannot be determined, the study team should provide information on the past capacity of the management entity to attract funding, or the rationale that a new management entity may do so in the future. Interviews with potential public and private funding sources can assist in determining the local interest of future financial support for heritage area projects and programs.

APPENDIX 4

SAMPLE PORTRAYAL OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENTS TO POTENTIAL NHA

Partnership commitments demonstrate, in large part, the capacity of the local participants to undertake and implement a future NHA. They may be agreements for working relationships, financial contributions, or pledges of other types of assistance. A sample way to portray commitments to the partnership is presented below:

Organization	Activity	\$ Commitment	TA/Education Commitment
State Lands Agency And Nonprofit Land Trusts	Land Acquisition and Trails Development in Heritage Area	X \$\$	Heritage Planning, Programming and Open Space Preservation
Management Entity Operational Budget (exclusive of federal funding)	Planning and Implementation	X\$\$	Partnership Development, Historic and Open Space Preservation and Interpretation
Nonprofit Organization	Historic Preservation	X \$\$ to Provide Match to NHA Local Grantees	Historic Preservation and National Register Nomination Advice
State Tourism Association	Tourism Development		Marketing and Tourism Advice
Private Foundation	Open Space and Historic Preservation	50/50 matching Grant for Planning and Resource Protection Projects	
Corporate Sponsor	Sponsor and Provide Tangible Contributions for Heritage Events		
County Government	Provide Office Space for Management Entity		Provide Web Page for Heritage Area Activities
Chamber of Commerce	Provide Design and Printing of Heritage Area Brochure		

As in the case of the conceptual financial plan, specific commitments may be difficult to ascertain during the study. Indications of commitments to assist and work in partnership with the management entity by state and local governments and other organizations may be substituted for actual dollar or other specific contributions. The study team should, however, attempt to ascertain tangible commitments that partners are willing to contribute to the successful implementation of the heritage area.