

U.S. Department
of the Interior

Heritage Conservation
and Recreation Service

Division of State
Plans and Grants

Preservation Planning Series

New Directions in Rural Preservation



Country way of life.

Garden of the Gods, Colorado—a national natural landmark.

Wisconsin barn sign.

Fishing for bass in Ben Hill County, Georgia.

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New Directions in Rural Preservation

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

The Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, a non-land managing agency within the department, is responsible for assuring the identification, protection, and beneficial use of our important cultural, natural, and recreational resources. The service offers grant assistance, technical information, and guidance to those in the public and private sectors involved in conservation or recreation projects.

U.S. Department of the Interior

Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary

Robert L. Herbst, Assistant Secretary

Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

Chris Therral Delaporte

Table of Contents

Statement from The White House, Jack H. Watson, Jr.	v
Foreword, by Lawrence E. Aten	vii
Introduction, by Robert E. Stipe	xi
Part 1. Issues in Rural Preservation	1
Introduction to Part 1, by Robert E. Stipe	3
Chapter 1. Federal Initiatives in Rural Preservation, by Robert L. Herbst	5
Chapter 2. Rural Preservation: A Perspective and a Challenge, by Robert E. Stipe	11
Chapter 3. The Role of Historic Preservation in Tomorrow's Rural Landscape, by William H. Tishler	25
Chapter 4. The Vanishing Swimming Hole: Policy and Planning Perspectives on Rural Recreation, by Ellen Ruth Reiss	33
Chapter 5. Some Social and Economic Under- pinnings of Rural Preservation, by Ann Satterthwaite	37
Chapter 6. Folklife and Cultural Preservation, by Alan Jabbour and Howard W. Marshall	43
Part 2. Techniques and Tools for the Preservation of Rural Resources	51
Introduction to Part 2, by Robert E. Stipe	53
Chapter 7. Rural Historic Resources and the National Register, by Bruce MacDougal	55
Chapter 8. Federal Funds for Historic Preservation in Rural Areas, by Marilyn P. Cable, Ken Pribanic, and Barbara Hightower Fallin	63
Chapter 9. Federal Programs to Preserve Natural and Recreational Resources in Rural America, by Barry S. Tindall	75
Chapter 10. The Role of Government in Shaping the Rural Landscape, by Dallas D. Miner	83
Chapter 11. Vermont Act 250 as a Tool for Rural Preservation, by Chester H. Liebs	91
Chapter 12. Private Rural Conservation Efforts, by Samuel N. Stokes, A. Elizabeth Watson, Joe Getty, and Douglas R. Horne	99
Chapter 13. New Directions in Landscape Conservation and Informal Recreation in Britain, by R.J.S. Hookway	107

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

On December 20, 1979, President Carter announced the nation's first comprehensive Small Community and Rural Development Policy. The President's policy recognizes that rural America is rich and diverse in history, culture, and natural beauty. It also recognizes that rural America is changing. For example, a much larger proportion of rural residents is now employed in manufacturing, trade and service industries than in agriculture. Moreover, the migration of people from rural areas into the cities has reversed; since 1970, the population of rural areas has increased 40 percent more than the population of our urban centers.

These changes create new demands and new challenges, as well as new opportunities. They require us to take stock of small community and rural values, and they vividly underscore the need for wise use and continued productivity of our bountiful resources.

The publication of "New Directions in Rural Preservation" is timely. It advocates a comprehensive approach to rural resource problem-solving. It discusses critical issues of rural preservation, as well as methods that State and local programs can employ to preserve and rehabilitate historic, natural and recreational resources. "New Directions in Rural Preservation" also describes some of the techniques and tools which can be used by private citizens to stimulate State and local action to preserve rural resources.

A closer partnership between Federal, State and local governments and the private sector is essential if we are to deal effectively with the problems and the potentialities of rural America. I am pleased that the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service is sponsoring this publication with that partnership so clearly in mind.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jack Watson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "W".

Jack H. Watson, Jr.
Assistant to the President
for Intergovernmental Affairs

Foreword

The Division of State Plans and Grants prepares technical assistance publications (the *Preservation Planning Series*) pertaining to implementation of the Historic Preservation Fund. The fund provides matching grants to the states for identification, evaluation, and protection of historic properties. Insofar as survey and preservation planning are concerned, these activities occur at four levels of implementation: individual survey and planning projects; local and state survey and planning program implementation; and federal survey and planning program oversight. The *Preservation Planning Series* addresses important identification, evaluation, and protection issues at each of these levels.

A great reservoir of historic resources exists in the rural areas of the United States. Rural historic resources have architectural, functional, and economic characteristics substantially unlike those of urban areas even though rural and urban resources are inextricably linked through their original historical environment as well as their contemporary social and economic environment for preservation. Rural preservation is strongly affected by

contemporary objectives of representing the cultural past in ways compatible with conserving energy, encouraging employment, and stabilizing and revitalizing communities. Rural preservation also is an area in which there are strong links with the natural and recreation environments, and broadly based strategies will serve preservation of all our national heritage resources. Under the editorship of Robert E. Stipe of the North Carolina State University, this publication focuses on an array of issues and techniques for rural heritage preservation.

The *Preservation Planning Series* is prepared under the supervision of Marilyn P. Cable. We welcome comments on publications in the series, invite suggestions for topics to be addressed in future publications, and will consider unsolicited manuscripts on preservation planning subjects for which there is a significant interest.

Lawrence E. Aten
Chief, Division of State
Plans and Grants

Acknowledgements

This book is the product of the interest, hard work, and dedication of many individuals.

We are most grateful to its general editor, Professor Robert E. Stipe of the North Carolina State University School of Design, who volunteered at an early date to oversee its publication, and to Ms. Marilyn P. Cable of the State Plans and Grants Division of HCRS, who served as overall coordinator for the work. Both worked long and diligently under unreasonable deadlines to bring this publication to fruition. Ms. Carol Shull of HCRS, and former members of the service, Dr. William Murtagh and Robert B. Rettig, provided special impetus and encouragement for the project from its inception, as did

former staff members Ms. Marnie Bodek and Ms. Lisa Soderberg.

Several HCRS staff members contributed to chapter 9, and some members of the Division of State Plans and Grants assisted in typing, proofreading, Xeroxing, and securing photographs for the publication. Production of the book was undertaken by the HCRS Office of Public Affairs, Publications Branch; their gracious assistance is much appreciated.

Overall, however, the book is essentially the product of the efforts of the individual authors whose essays appear herein, and whose care and concern for the preservation and conservation of the American countryside augur well for its future. To them we extend our special thanks.

Introduction

This book represents an initiative of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior to revitalize, protect, and conserve rural areas, including their human, natural, cultural, and recreational resources.

The preliminary reports of the 1980 Census make clear that for the first time in many decades the migration of the population to cities and metropolitan areas has slowed, and that a major shift in settlement patterns toward America's small communities and rural areas is underway. These changes, coupled with the fact that the rural areas of the nation are by and large also the repository of natural resources that will be needed as we enter into a prolonged period of struggle for energy self-sufficiency, suggest that new and unforeseen conflicts will arise as we seek a balance between the imperatives of conservation on the one hand and development on the other.

The urgency and timeliness of the President's Small Community and Rural Development Policy needs no elaboration. But as in all such matters, simply announcing a policy does not in and of itself produce the desired result. We know from the experience of the many decades when it was national policy to create both productive and humane cities, especially since the end of World War II, that difficult issues will have to be faced and resolved in translating policy directives from mere statements of good intentions to actual results on the ground. There are not only the issues of "what" is to be done, but also the question of "how." It is equally clear as the result of past experience that achieving an acceptable outcome will require the coordinated use of a variety of implementation techniques by national, state, and local governments, and that these must be carefully balanced and coordinated with the needs of the private sector of the economy.

The central purpose of this book is a simple one. It is to heighten public awareness of the need to preserve the natural, cultural, recreational, and human resources of rural areas, and to provide information and insights regarding practical preservation and conservation approaches that have already been applied with success.

The general structure of the book is also simple. Part 1 contains a collection of essays emphasizing some of the central issues that will be confronted in the preservation of small communities and rural areas. Some of these issues will not be unfamiliar to readers who have followed the progress of the preservation-conservation movement in urban areas in recent years, even though

the rural context is a new one. Others are somewhat innovative and exploratory, in the sense that they introduce new and compelling components to the very concept of what has traditionally been regarded as important to preserve in rural areas. Part 2 of this book contains essays directed to particular techniques for identifying and evaluating different types of natural, recreational, and cultural resources and to organizing and funding programs for their conservation. In addition to the federal role, those of state and local governments and of the private sector are also described and discussed. Finally, countryside conservation and rural recreation have been topics of special concern and attention in Great Britain since the late 1940s, and because of the special relevance of the British experience to this new emphasis on rural conservation in the United States, the book concludes with a chapter relating that experience and some of the new directions it has taken in recent years.

The present work has been sponsored by HCRS because it has had, since its creation in January 1978, special responsibilities within the Department of the Interior for the preservation of cultural, natural, and recreational resources in both urban and rural areas. The idea for this publication was first conceived by the Planning Branch of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation (now the Office of Cultural Programs) in 1977. It was discussed in detail at the February 1978 meeting of the National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers in Washington, D.C., during which papers dealing with rural preservation issues and techniques were presented and discussed. The response to those papers was enthusiastic, serious interest in a publication was generated, and the present editor volunteered at that time to oversee its preparation. Initially it was proposed to include 5 essays in pamphlet form; during the intervening 2 years it has grown to 13, resulting in the present volume. To stimulate further thought, each contributing author has prepared a special bibliography of recommended works for his or her essay, which will be found immediately following the appropriate chapter.

HCRS and the editor hope this work serves a useful purpose in stimulating thought, discussion, and constructive action to deal with a problem of growing urgency to millions of Americans.

Robert E. Stipe, Editor
July 4, 1980
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Part 1. Issues in Rural Preservation

Introduction to Part 1

"Conservation and preservation are twin missions. Their mutual center is a concern that natural and historic resources be protected, perpetuated, and used."

This assertion by Robert L. Herbst, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, U.S. Department of the Interior, sets a tone for part 1 of this book. Notwithstanding . . . the existence of related programs located in a dozen or more other federal agencies, the Department of the Interior has been the principal agency of the national government of the United States in conservation and preservation matters for more than a century.

In his essay in chapter 1, Secretary Herbst describes the background of the January 1978 reorganization within the department that centralized within the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) overall responsibility for major problems dealing with outdoor recreation, the protection of natural areas, and historic preservation. Also described are several of the initiatives taken by HCRS and the department since reorganization, such as the concept of areas of national concern and the areas of important fish and wildlife habitat, as well as well-established programs of outdoor recreation, historic preservation, wild and scenic rivers, and scenic trails. It is an articulate and useful introduction to both the structure and the "mind set" of the nation's lead federal agency in rural preservation.

Chapter 2, a perspective on the major issues related to rural preservation, by the editor of this publication, is an attempt to look at the problems and issues of rural preservation in the larger context of the division of conservation responsibilities among national, state, and local responsibilities, especially since these have developed since passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. It includes a recitation of rural preservation problems, many of which are not new but arise from our past experience in the field of urban historic preservation. Although many of these are of a traditional and technical sort, those emphasized deal primarily with the attitudes, viewpoints, and values of preservationists; the changing concepts of preservation since 1966; and the urgent need in attacking rural preservation problems to give special consideration to matters of economic balance, the life-styles and aspirations of rural residents, and more leadership from local governments and the private sector.

Chapter 3, by Professor William H. Tishler, a landscape architect, focuses on the changing landscape as an essential element of rural preservation programs—an element quite different in nature than the artifactual content of traditional urban historic preservation programs.

He suggests a number of new approaches as appropriate for rural areas: the adaptation of existing survey and inventory methods, a need for more interdisciplinary cooperative efforts, and a need on the part of traditional preservationists to begin to understand the nature and function of land itself. Citizen involvement in rural planning processes is identified as a special concern, as is the need to reassess our customary ways of thinking about such issues as "significance," registration, and protective systems as related to the landscape.

Ellen Ruth Reiss, a recreation planner and specialist, presents in chapter 4 the need of all of us to understand that recreation is a vital aspect of rural life for residents and visitors alike, the importance of historical and cultural resources as essential elements of the rural recreation experience, and the dangers posed by the rapid disappearance of resources available for recreation in rural areas. She stresses the importance of a "new view" of recreation that is important not only for its own sake, but as offering unique opportunities for solving other, broader aspects of rural community life.

Ann Satterthwaite, an urban planner, presents the argument in chapter 5 that because of our past preoccupation with buildings, structures, districts, sites, and objects in urban historic preservation programs, we run an equal or more dangerous risk in rural communities of failing to deal adequately with the economic and social byproducts of preservation and conservation programs. These include the dislocation of residents of rural areas and the danger of "gentrification," the loss of employment opportunities for rural residents, land speculation, and the inadvertent changing of the social structure of rural communities. She argues for a different approach to preservation planning in rural areas that is smaller in scale, pays greater attention to the problems of small, rural business enterprises, and finds new ways for local residents to have a larger voice in how their communities develop while being preserved. A major issue, in her view, is the problem of articulating rural preservation strategies that balance the need for "pure" preservation against the requirements of a more socially relevant, utilitarian-conservationist approach.

In chapter 6, Alan Jabbour and Howard W. Marshall of the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress, present the argument that the preservation of folkways and folklife are no less an essential element of rural preservation planning and programming than the protection of cultural, landscape, natural, and recreational resources. Such a concept, which has long been accepted as an important aspect of historic preservation in other Western nations, has an important part to play

in American rural preservation efforts. Through case studies, their work demonstrates some of the methods used by folklife specialists to record and preserve rural traditions, stressing the importance of more shared experiences and interdisciplinary efforts among preservationists of many backgrounds.

Whether the reader's special interests lie in cultural, natural, or recreational resources, many of the issues presented in this part will have a familiar ring. Some, for example those posed by Ms. Satterthwaite, while not

unfamiliar, pose special problems of implementation that must be seriously addressed by all of the members of the preservation/conservation community. Others, such as the place of folklife preservation in the total rural preservation effort, come as new directions yet to be explored. Happily, however, a common thread that runs throughout part 1 is an underlying attitude that the time is now ripe for preservation interests and institutions that have hitherto pursued highly specialized and narrow purposes to come together in pursuit of common objectives.

Chapter 1.

Federal Initiatives in Rural Preservation¹

by Robert L. Herbst

To begin I wish to restate, as emphatically as possible, the commitment of the present administration and the Department of the Interior to open space protection and historic preservation.

When these two goals are coupled, we see an innate commonality within the conservation ethic and find that commonality in the National Heritage Program that President Carter initiated by a directive in his May 1977 environmental message to the Congress. President Carter asserted the government's responsibility to assume stewardship of the environment on behalf of all Americans, and he directed Secretary Andrus to develop a proposal for a comprehensive National Heritage Program to identify and preserve "places that have special natural, cultural, and scientific value."

The Department of the Interior was the logical place for this new program because it is the nation's principal conservation agency. It has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, our energy and minerals, our fish and wildlife, our parks and recreation areas, our historic and cultural sites and areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources.

Conservation and preservation are twin missions, mutually concerned with protecting, perpetuating, and using natural and historic resources. As the administration endorsed the plans for this new effort, it saw the need for one central agency to coordinate, organize, and administer such a program at the federal level. In January 1978 the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) was created to do the job. HCRS was formed from three existing federal offices and programs: the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, and the National Natural Landmarks Program, the latter two formerly administered by the National Park Service.

Our central purpose is to ensure that the new service is responsive in every area to the central philosophy of the National Heritage Program. The philosophy is that preservation and conservation of the heritage resources of this country—both cultural and natural—are not solely the responsibilities of the federal government, but instead are the responsibilities of everyone—of private individuals and organizations, of the state and local governments, and all of these with the cooperation and support of the federal government.

HCRS represents more than just a convenient shifting of personnel and functions; it represents an important

philosophical reorientation on the part of the federal government in the area of resource preservation. The creation of HCRS responded to the need for one central point in the federal government to coordinate federal policy planning and to provide technical and financial assistance to the states to meet our national objectives in three specific areas: 1) historic preservation, 2) natural area conservation, and 3) recreation planning and development.



Photo: Courtesy of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Canaan Valley in West Virginia is designated a national natural landmark because it is a northern boreal relict community, unique for its size, elevation, and diversity, and for occurring at this latitude.

All three of these areas add up to one central theme: improvement of the quality of life, both for our own generation and for those to come. Obviously, the nation was ready for this approach. The legislative basis for carrying out the heritage program is contained in the administration's proposal—the National Heritage Policy Act—which is now being considered by the Ninety-Sixth Congress. The bill would:

- Establish formal national policy and goals in the identification, selection, and protection of natural and man-made heritage resources of local, state, or national significance.
- Assist the states in the development of voluntary state natural heritage programs for the systematic identification of significant biological and geological features.
- Establish a National Register of Natural Areas to complement the National Register of Historic Places.

¹ This article is taken from remarks of Honorable Robert L. Herbst, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, before the Rural Conservation Conference in Annapolis, Maryland, on April 20, 1979.

- Reconstitute the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as the "Council on Heritage Conservation," adding oversight of natural area protection parallel to the existing historic preservation responsibility.
- Amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund to allow its use for grants to states for natural area preservation activities, even if they are not fully open for public recreation.
- Afford protection from the adverse impacts of federal projects to properties that are on, or eligible for, either register.
- Authorize the study of additional economic incentives and alternative protection techniques to encourage the protection and preservation of heritage resources by the private sector.

The selection of the former Bureau of Outdoor Recreation as one of the "core" agencies for HCRS was not an accident. It was essential to the philosophy of the President, the Secretary, the Heritage Task Force, and myself that this program not be another big federal investment-and-takeover program. There is no federal land acquisition authorized under the heritage bill. We do not intend to buy back America. The strength of this new program must lie close to the resources themselves, and the federal agency administering the program must be able to work closely with the states, with local governments, and with the private sector. Both the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation brought with them a tradition of working with states and of listening and responding to their concerns. In addition, they brought successful records in providing technical and financial assistance for both recreation development and historic preservation.

There are many reasons why these two conservation thrusts should come together and discover their common roots. One is in the interests of efficiency and economy: money for government operations is becoming scarcer. Both inflation and residual public mistrust of government lead to the conclusion that the only effective government program of the future will be lean, efficient, and responsive. We are committed to making Interior's programs lean, efficient, and responsive, so that we maintain the federal government's commitment to heritage resource protection through this period of fiscal compression.

The second reason is simply that from a conceptual standpoint it makes good sense. We live in a world where all of our roots are important—those that ground us in the natural world from which we grew, and those that bind us to our cultural heritage—the peculiarly human events that have brought us this far together.

Both sets of roots are endangered today. It makes no sense for naturalists and the historic preservationists to be at odds. As Margaret Mead said in one of her last interviews—published in *American Preservation*, "You could start by getting all the people who are trying to destroy each other to cooperate with each other."

The Interior Department's approach to a federal role suited to the problem as it exists in society today and to the fiscal strictures on us is exemplified by the role of HCRS:

- 1) that agency should set national standards for heritage conservation;

- 2) it should define role relationships among the various levels of government and between the public and private sectors;
- 3) it should provide technical data and assistance in heritage conservation;
- 4) it should provide recognition for heritage resources and resource conservation efforts;
- 5) it should be able to respond to state and local efforts in a way that will increase rather than diminish state and local initiative and capability; and
- 6) HCRS will be providing recreation input to the White House as it studies rural problems and needs.

This year, in conjunction with other federal agencies, HCRS will also initiate a rural and small communities recreation study. This study will parallel our 1978 Urban Recreation Study, which led to the passage of the Urban Park Ethic Act, and will identify the recreation needs of people in rural areas. That people who live near the "wide open spaces" should have recreational needs may come as a surprise. It is true that rural communities rely heavily on their proximity to natural resources and undeveloped open areas for their outdoor recreation activities; however, availability of open spaces does not fill the bill for all recreation needs. Teenagers and elderly residents of the areas probably suffer the most from lack of recreation programs and facilities. This lack is the key problem in rural recreation.

In contrast to urban areas where there is a large enough population to support the construction, operating costs, and programs of recreational facilities and services—either by the private sector or municipal governments—communities with small populations cannot provide the fiscal base. Therefore, they suffer from many deficiencies in their rural opportunities.

Several examples of how HCRS' programs can encourage preservation without a large federal presence will be of interest. While HCRS does not buy or manage land, it does provide money for states and localities to acquire property through the Land and Water Conservation and the Historic Preservation Funds, and through the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program. It is also working on ways short of acquisition to protect valuable lands that are threatened by development.



Photo: Leo Willette. Courtesy of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

This park, funded in part by a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, is an example of the type of recreation facilities that can be provided in rural areas.

One exciting possibility under development in HCRS is national reserves, also known as "areas of national concern." These are large, important areas containing a variety of natural, cultural, economic, scenic, and recreation resources, which for a variety of reasons cannot or should not be totally acquired in fee. Although some land acquisition might still be used to protect these resources, emphasis would be on protection through mechanisms such as regulation, tax policy, and purchase of easements or other partial interests in land. These techniques for rural conservation have been tested and have proven their value and practicality.

The mechanism to be used in a national reserve area would be spelled out in a comprehensive management plan, prepared by appropriate state, local, and regional authorities and approved by the federal government. As a condition of federal approval, local and state governments would commit themselves to manage the reserve in accordance with this plan. In return, the federal government would provide grants to manage the area and to purchase limited lands on rights-of-way as spelled out in the plan. This approach would guarantee that all federal actions remained consistent with the plan to the fullest possible extent.

The Adirondacks Park Agency is a shining example of the conservation mix that this approach can achieve. The area has been called "a living story book of the past." It is a unique park that covers one-fifth of the total area of New York state and binds together primitive wilderness, quaint rustic hamlets, and modern commercial activity—once potential enemies that now exist easily together. The result is protected watershed and wildlife, relatively clean air and water, a fantastic range of recreational opportunities, and one of the nation's outstanding regional museum complexes, which lovingly preserves the history of Indian and European people and their relationship to the Adirondacks.

We are currently developing the first national reserve in the New Jersey Pinelands under legislation passed in 1978. The reserve concept has important implications for the preservation of critical ecological resources in other threatened parts of the country as well.

Where as the Pine Barrens is a silvicultural ecosystem with a unique combination of soil, plants, and animals, the Achafalaya Basin in Louisiana represents a different kind of disappearing ecosystem—bottomlands hardwood. Although the proposed Achafalaya Area of National Concern lies entirely within the state of Louisiana, it receives surface water runoff from 41 percent of the land in the continental United States. It supports a fabulous array of waterfowl, the largest nesting population of bald eagles in the South Central United States, white-tailed deer, swamp rabbits, grey and fox squirrels, wild turkey, and black bear. Once this unique ecosystem covered 25 million acres; today it constitutes only 3 million acres, and shrinks at an alarming rate of 300,000 acres a year. Other areas like Jackson Hole need special similar attention.

The areas of national concern are in a sense the giant economy size of another package known as areas of important fish and wildlife habitat. Unrestricted development is rapidly converting our remaining wildlife habitat into subdivisions, shopping centers, industrial parks, and agricultural developments. Although we aren't sure what

these areas do for us, or what they contribute to our lives, the wisest course, until we are sure, is to let them not all slip away. Protecting these areas could turn out to be our generation's most important conservation contribution. All this is in line with Aldo Leopold's admonition that careful tinkering demands that none of the pieces be thrown away until we understand all the facts.

This program is lodged in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Recognizing the speed with which wildlife habitat was slipping away, the service embarked on the program to save some of our last remaining wildlands, by developing a cooperative federal program with full participation of state and local governments, conservation organizations, and private citizens.

The program's first step will be to identify areas in private ownership that qualify as unique fish and wildlife habitats. First consideration will be given to habitats unique to a region or of national significance in and of themselves and of benefit to the public over a large geographical area. The value of the threatened or endangered wildlife will also receive a high order of concern. A concept plan will be prepared for each state to identify these areas and to outline a strategy for their protection.

The second step will be preserving the identified habitats through easements and land acquisition. Two examples of areas already identified are one on the San Pedro River in Arizona, where more species of birds and mammals can be found than almost any other such small area in the world, and one in West Virginia, where one of this nation's finest stands of old world trees is situated.²



Photo: Courtesy of the Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina.

The Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina, Inc., the first independent, nonprofit, statewide revolving fund for historic preservation in the United States, uses money from HCRS's Historic Preservation Fund to accomplish preservation. The Jeduthun Harper house, near Trinity, North Carolina, was bought by the North Carolina organization and sold with the understanding that the exterior would be restored. Built about 1795, the house is an example of frame Federal architecture in the Piedmont region.

² Federal acquisition of a specific area of important fish and wildlife habitat will occur only after Congress and the President have signed a bill authorizing the purchase.

On the historic side of our conservation coin, we find another tool for making public dollars go further—the revolving fund. The idea of this fund is to provide money in such a way that it can be recovered for future use.

Once a revolving fund is in full operation, the money paid out is returned through sale or rental of property or repayment of loans. Money is then available to be used again for some other project. The Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina, Inc., the first independent, non-profit, statewide revolving fund for historic preservation in the United States, uses money from an HCRS-administered grant program—the Historic Preservation Fund.

This fund provides monies for purchasing historic properties to be resold with protective covenants, for acquiring options that can be used to hold property off the market until a sympathetic buyer can be found, and for loan guarantees to local preservation groups. The fund is not used for long-term ownership or management of historic properties. In addition to saving endangered properties throughout the state, the fund supports the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in the State Division of Archives and History, in preserving properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

HCRS funds awarded by the Division of Archives and History have been used to acquire property on a 50/50 matching basis with the Historic Preservation Fund under regular grant application procedures. When the property is resold, 75 percent of the original grant is returned to the SHPO while the fund retains 25 percent. Both portions are free of further federal restrictions. This arrangement ultimately provides the SHPO with a source of funds that can be put to work swiftly and without the paperwork required by federal grants.

The revolving fund approach also has been used to acquire threatened natural resources. Private organizations such as the Nature Conservancy and the Izaak Walton Endorsement Fund often purchase land or easements, which are subsequently repurchased by states or the federal government, using Land and Water Conservation Fund money.

The use of revolving funds is important not only in making limited dollars go further, but also in building institutional capabilities and commitment within states and communities. Revolving funds can be important tools for preserving rural areas.

Another natural ally in this thrust to consolidate our conservation efforts is the Soil Conservation Service. A little over 2 years ago, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Soil Conservation Service signed a set of guidelines for stream modification as a water management technique. The joint action by these two services stemmed from the realization by their experts that channelization of streams is frequently an indication of improper land-use practices and that its effect often destroys important wildlife habitat. In essence, stream channelization ties together two unacceptable conditions—misuses of soils and destruction of wildlife habitat.

The joint action of the Fish and Wildlife and the Soil Conservation services brought a resurgence of the original concepts of Hugh Bennett—the idea of keeping water where it falls and maintaining the basic values of the soils. Their results have been so promising that a task force in the summer of 1979 reviewed the first full year of guidelines implementation. The Fish and Wildlife and Soil Conservation team evaluated the first year's operation and presented recommendations on future action. President Carter recommended that the guidelines be



Photo: Lloyd C. Hulbert. Courtesy of the Nature Conservancy.

The Nature Conservancy purchased this 7,200-acre virgin tallgrass prairie near Manhattan, Kansas.

converted into regulations, and the proposed regulations be published.

Finally, I must touch briefly on national scenic trails and wild and scenic rivers. The basic principle behind both concepts is to preserve and perpetuate remarkable and vanishing values, but to do so without recourse to the traditional concept that underlies the National Park System. Rather than acquiring massive land areas, the federal agency managing a component of either of these systems is limited in the amount of acquisition of private lands to an average no more than 100 to 125 acres per mile on each side of a river or trail. Preservation of related stream or trail values is accomplished by local fee simple acquisition, scenic and use easements, and local zoning restrictions.

With scenic easements the land remains in private ownership and continues to contribute to the local economy by staying on the tax rolls. Granted, the establishment of a wild and scenic or recreational river would remove some acreage from the tax rolls, but experience has shown that appropriately developed and controlled recreation and natural areas stimulate related private support enterprises that in turn eventually increase the tax base.

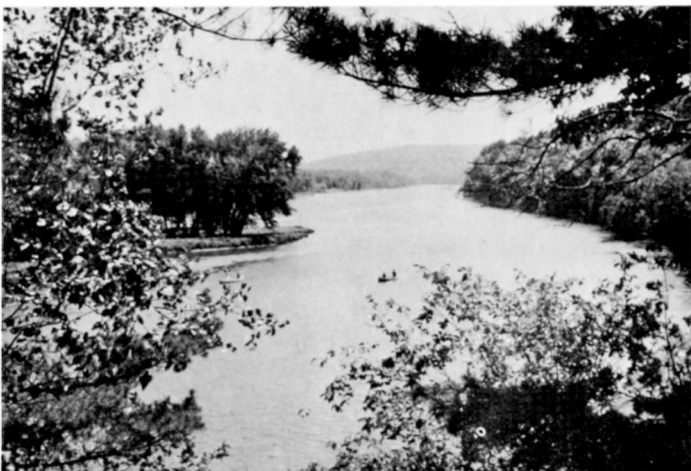


Photo: A Kesterke. Courtesy of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. *The St. Croix River, which forms the boundary between Wisconsin and Minnesota, was designated a Wild and Scenic River by the U.S. Congress. HCRS reviewed the application by the states for their administration of the lower portion of the river.*

As a species we have lived in our world a long time. Most of that time we were simply another form of life, occupying our own niche, threatening no other species, and not affecting the life-support systems. In relatively recent times, as life on the planet goes, we began to "take charge." Suddenly every other form of life was on notice that it could either step out of our way, or get off the world.

As today's youngsters would say, "That is a very heavy trip!" To make it heavier, we have experienced in the past year an event dubbed the Three-Mile Island incident. That incident introduced most of us to a new term—"containment vessel." At Three-Mile Island the question was, Would the vessel hold and continue to contain the seething nuclear activity that had gotten out of control inside? We pause on the brink of what may

be our last measured appraisal before deciding and moving ahead with our national energy options to remind ourselves that whatever our choices, we must carry them out inside a fragile containment vessel we call "the environment." The environment is the ultimate containment vessel for whatever means we choose to continue powering our economy and our society. Will it hold? Will it continue to support life in all the healthy diversity we now know?

We have no exact idea of what all the jobs are that keep our environment in balance. We don't know which of our fellow creatures perform all these tasks. How many of them can we afford to dismiss or destroy? Remember, there is no other vessel further on out, to catch and contain our mistakes.

The phrase "there's no free lunch" applies to every consumptive act that takes place on earth, and nowhere is that phrase more significant than when we are choosing the means for powering this nation and its society. Whatever we choose, there will be environmental costs: sources of energy such as nuclear, oil, coal, even wind and solar, all have their own set of debits.

What is required, and quickly, is that we find a method to keep an honest book of environmental as well as economic costs. We must learn to put a price tag on the free energies our environmental containment vessel has always provided us, even those we have taken so arrogantly for granted.

And it isn't just a matter of "the nukes." There are plenty of other pressures in this containment vessel that are ravelling the web of life. The teeming diversity of animal and plant forms may seem like just an interesting backdrop for the system that really matters—the human system, but that diversity is the working web through which sunlight flows and is concentrated and moves on up the food chains—the network that does the vast, uncounted amounts of work we take for granted but are so utterly dependent on.

The pressures to develop new resources and the pressures to dispose of used resources are meeting, like a giant pincer claw, and we have hard decisions to make in the pinch. City officials seeking land to bury their municipal wastes are meeting officials from neighboring cities seeking land to bury their wastes. At Three-Mile Island, accident wastes that are biodegradable only in terms of thousands of years are presenting officials with a mighty escalation of the municipal waste scenario.

What happened at Three-Mile Island can be viewed in widely different ways, but only time and genetic book-keeping will tell who was right. Whether the incident was a serious one or a minor event blown out of proportion, the fact remains that another escalation of the resources-and-waste problem has occurred, and we are another step closer to land-use planning on a national scale.

Fortunately, we have a new set of tools with handles suitable for many hands that invite us to pick them up and build our future. An overactive federal role, like an overactive thyroid condition, would not be in the interests of a healthy national body. Every level and every natural grouping must function actively and in balance. Whatever path this evolution takes, it is this administration's purpose to be its synthesizer, coordinator, and supporter. It is the role of the people that the federal government represents to write their own ticket.

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Chapter 2.

Rural Preservation: A Perspective and a Challenge

by Robert E. Stipe

Putting perspective on a topic as broad as “rural preservation” is not easy. The words “rural” and “preservation” mean different things to different people, and the concept of “perspective” as a device for relating the parts of a view or a subject to one another and to the whole ensure that each observer’s perspective will also be different. The unique viewpoint of each observer immediately introduces the element of personal bias, and the requirement for a view of the whole presents the risk that a serious subject may be approached too casually.

It is also important to understand at the outset that concepts like “heritage” and “preservation” are essentially abstractions, and that in dealing with abstractions it is impossible to completely isolate the impact of one idea or activity from another. In many respects rural preservation is a seamless web of interconnected ideas, values, actors, problems, and objectives, and each of these plays a different part in the scene at different times and places.

My first perspective on rural preservation is that like most of the programs designed to improve the lot of society, rural preservation has to operate in a public sector and a private sector. The public sector in our country has three levels—federal, state, and local—thus a quick look at the governmental context for rural preservation becomes the starting point for this essay. My second perspective is one based on time: It looks at historic preservation problems as we perceived them in the mid-sixties and places them in the context of changes that have taken place within the preservation movement itself since that time. The third perspective looks at some of the similarities and differences between rural areas and cities, and points up some special problems that will have to be taken into account in preserving rural areas. The final perspective: Where do we go from here?

The Governmental Context

The best introduction to the governmental context is an aphorism that is sometimes heard at meetings of local public officials: “The federal government has the money, the states have the power, and the local governments have the problems.” It is indeed a parochial view and one tinged with sarcasm. But it is also an attitude widely held outside the national and state capitals, and there is just enough truth in it to serve as a useful basis for a quick review of how our federal system operates.

First, it should be noted that the national or federal government is a creation of the states, and that it takes its authority from powers delegated to it by the states in the U.S. Constitution, backed by acts of Congress. With the exception of the Due Process and Equal Protection

clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth amendments, and, possibly, the Interstate Commerce Clause (which are only indirectly relevant here), the federal government therefore must rely on its taxing and spending powers for the accomplishment of national priorities and objectives.

Thus, most of what the federal government is able to accomplish in the preservation-conservation field stems from its ability and willingness to provide direct and indirect financial subsidies (grants-in-aid, loans, tax concessions, and so forth), and on the provision of a wide array of technical, educational, and coordinative services that support any given program. By and large the national government does not and cannot, in theory at least, compel the states to participate in any national enterprise—whether it is one involving highway construction, historic preservation, the building of airports or hospitals, or whatever. It can only encourage state and local participation through generous financial incentives. In return for this largesse, state and local governments and individuals must comply with conditions called (mistakenly in the technical sense) “Federal Regulations.”

What the federal government does best, then, is to energize state and local governments and private organi-



Photo: Courtesy of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Through operation of the National Parks system, the federal government protects a wide variety of rural landscapes, which are important for their history, natural beauty, and recreation opportunities. Yorktown (Virginia) National Historic Park is one example.

zations and individuals to undertake activities and programs deemed to be in the national interest by helping to create an economic "climate" in which these activities can flourish. This is the essence of what we have come to call, in many areas, "the Federal Partnership." That it has on the whole worked well, notwithstanding a few problems here and there, does not require elaboration.

A second important role of the national government stems from its status as landowner, manager, or operator of many programs—the National Park system, for example, or the maintenance of navigable waterways. As owner or manager it can play an extremely important part in maintaining environmental quality through such mechanisms as Executive Order 11593, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, or NEPA. It tries to ensure through elaborate processes of disclosure, environmental review, and mediation, that the natural and cultural resources of local places are not fouled or destroyed as the result of its own programs or actions.

Given the immense financial resources of the national government (and the considerable dependence of state and local governments on those resources), it is easy to forget that under our federal system, the "sovereign" units of government in the United States are the states themselves. Of course, in the area of preservation and conservation, the states undertake many activities that are in consonance with national objectives—sometimes

on their own motion and with their own resources, and sometimes as agents or partners of the federal government. They own and maintain state parks, nature reserves and state forests; they provide outdoor recreation facilities; they are increasingly busy locating, cataloging, and protecting environmentally sensitive areas; and they own and operate historic sites and museums. Many of them now have state-level counterparts of the federal planning and environmental review programs.

At this point, it is useful to remember that one of the basic governmental powers for preservation and conservation—that is, the power to regulate individual conduct and the use of land, which we call the Police Power—is inherently a state power; it was not ceded to the federal government in the Constitution of 1787. Sometimes this regulatory power is exercised for environmental protection purposes by the states themselves, and often it is delegated to local units of government such as cities and counties. As will be seen later, how this power is used (or misused) by state and local governments is a central issue in any program called "rural preservation."

This brings us to the role of local governments in rural preservation programs. What authority do they have? Being creatures of the states, they have essentially no authority other than that delegated to them by the states. Their powers are limited, as are, usually, their financial resources. But if one accepts that the resources



Photo: D.O. Hambly. Courtesy of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

An important role of the national government stems from its status as landowner. Padre Island is a wilderness area protected by the National Park Service.



Photo: Walter Smalling, Jr. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places.

Rural regions dramatically experience the impact of the nation's demand for energy, water, and minerals. At Crested Butte, Colorado, the mining of molybdenum in nearby Mount Emmons may once again return the Victorian boomtown to prosperity. But progress comes at a high cost—the destruction of Mount Emmons and the loss of the area's natural, recreational, and cultural character.

we seek to preserve or provide in rural areas—cultural, natural, or recreational—have their principal value to local populations who must live in them and use them in many different ways, the responsibility for environmental maintenance and betterment should in theory fall more heavily on local than on state or federal governments. Logic would also suggest that since local government (which in the context of a book on rural preservation usually means “county” government) is closest to the people, it would be the most responsive to such needs. Unfortunately, this is not usually the case.

In my state of North Carolina, state government in Raleigh is a long way from most “local” places, and the state's resources in dollars and expertise to deal with rural preservation problems are already stretched very thin. Washington is even more remote, and except to ensure that the environmental quality and resources of local places are not violated by federal actions and programs, it can do little, relatively speaking, to develop or

protect local quality. Thus, until rural preservation can be recognized as a much more important aspect of local community life and thereby command more attention and respect as an appropriate subject for local political concern, little that is done in state or national capitals will be of much real benefit.

This view stems in part from a personal perspective that many preservation and conservation efforts in the public sector during the last decade have become highly dependent on state capitals like Raleigh, and on Washington; that much of what has been accomplished has been done according to rules, policies, and judgments made in remote places; and that much of what must be accomplished at the local level is yet to be attended to.

The Rural Preservation Problems of the Sixties

As mentioned earlier, one of the principal ways the federal government has sought to activate programs to deal with national concerns has been through the promise

and provision of federal aid to states and other units of government by way of partnership agreements. Since federal aid programs began to burgeon in the 1940s, it has been a habit of Congress to require as a condition of receiving of such aid, that participating states first prepare so-called statewide plans as a basis for justifying the need for funds and managing their expenditure in accordance with national priorities. This requirement has been standard procedure in federal aid programs for the construction of highways, hospitals and medical facilities, airports, outdoor recreation facilities, and many if not most other federal programs of aid to the states for many years.

Customarily, these statewide plans have required that the participating state submit a detailed inventory of its existing resources, a statement of the problems that federal aid will help overcome, a statement of general approach or philosophy, and a plan of action for making good use of the money. The National Historic Preservation Act was no exception to these requirements when it

was passed in 1966, and it is from the problem statements furnished as part of the statewide historic preservation plans that we were able to obtain a good view of both urban and rural preservation problems on a nationwide basis. Although the level of detail and the formats of these plans varied a great deal, the problems then tended to be organized along the following lines:

1. *Problems Related to Changes in Agriculture:* Small, family farms have been agglomerated into larger, more efficient productive units. This problem was said to be a result of the declining profitability of family farms, and the increasing use of farm machinery and high technology in agricultural activities of all kinds. The preservation consequence is abandonment, decay, and eventual loss of rural farmhouses and buildings.
2. *Urban Expansion and Uncontrolled Growth:* Business and industry move from urban areas to open country, new factories encroach on prime agricultural land, and crop and pasture land are replaced with space-consuming



Photo: Walter Smalling, Jr. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places.

Creation of the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 stimulated the identification and evaluation of historic resources throughout the United States. This house, once used for tanning skins for the Shaker community, is part of the Shakertown Historic District in Mercer County, Kentucky, which was included in the National Register in 1971.

buildings and parking lots for employees; commercial and housing developments spread to rural locations or at interchanges on the Interstate Highway System; and public utilities and urban public works are needed to serve the requirements of growth—water impoundments, new highway rights-of-way, easements for power lines, and the like. The preservation consequence is general disruption of the character of the countryside; increased pressure for the demolition or inappropriate conversion of historic buildings and the thoughtless or willful destruction of archeological resources.

3. *A Widespread Antiurban and Antirural Attitude:* By default, this left only the suburbs as a “proper” focus of attention in matters of public policy and capital investment in the 1960s, with the consequence for preservation that both urban *and* rural cultural resources were widely ignored or overlooked.

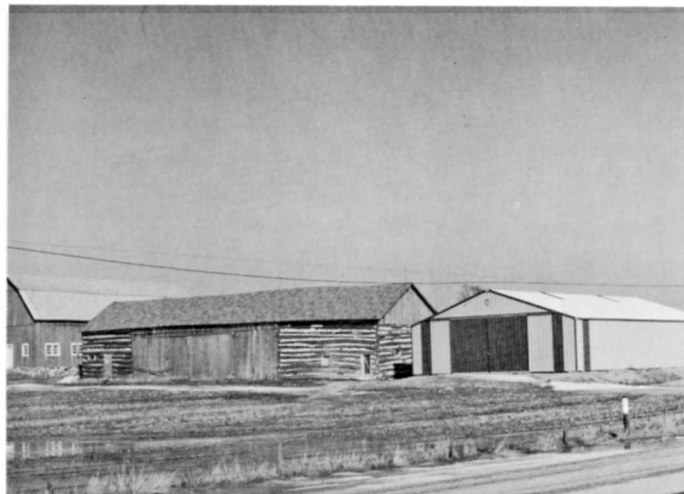


Photo: William H. Tishler.

As this farm has grown, so has the need for farm structures to service it. Although the prefabricated building provides that function, it intrudes on the space occupied by the older, more culturally unique barns.



Photo: William H. Tishler.

The declining profitability of small, family farms has resulted in the abandonment and decay of rural farmhouses.



Photo: St. Gil. Courtesy of Documerica, Environmental Protection Agency.

The decentralization of industry from urban areas to rural areas disrupts the character of the countryside, as illustrated by these chemical plants in Louisiana.

4. *Unfavorable National Economic Climate:* The twin evils of recession and inflation are simultaneously present. The preservation consequences are the lack of public funds with which to undertake inventories and surveys of historic buildings in rural areas, and a lack of public and private money and high interest rates for the rehabilitation and preservation of historic buildings.

5. *Preservation Problems Created by Government:* Federal and state agencies have been inadequately concerned with locating and designing public works in rural areas—airports, prisons, and reservoirs being the most frequent villains. They have shown complicity and active partnership in the outright demolition of important buildings and the destruction of archeological sites. The preservation consequences are infringement on public historic sites by other government facilities, the wanton destruction of trees and landscapes, and the routing of high volumes of traffic through fragile and historically important rural villages.



Photo: Courtesy of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Trash on the Merced River Beach, Yosemite National Park, is a reminder of the high volumes of traffic that pass through the park.

6. *Desecration of Historic Sites and Shrines:* The tendency, especially at the state level, is to place public recreation facilities too close to historic sites. This results in hordes of visitors who litter and disturb other visitors to historic sites with noise from recreational activities. Other consequences were defacement of petroglyphs and destruction of rural battlefields by hobbyists using metal detectors to locate and dig up artifacts.

7. *The Special Problems of Buildings Located in Rural Areas:* Some special problems include the destruction of historic buildings and structures in rural areas by arson or forest fires, fires resulting from lightning strikes at farms and plantations in open fields, and the special vulnerability of older frame structures in rural locations with outmoded wiring and heating systems; the loss of historic buildings by fire through carelessness on the part of farmer-occupiers or the owners, occasional mischief, and the outright vandalism of unprotected buildings in remote areas; and the wanton destruction of farm cemeteries and the stripping of hardware and valuable architectural details from unoccupied rural buildings.

Looking back, it is not surprising that we approached the first national inventory of preservation problems in the late 1960s from a narrow perspective. The rural preservation problem was widely regarded as one that

centered on the necessity to find and save good buildings in rural areas—"good buildings" generally being those to which the traditional associative values of history and architecture, preferably high-style, could be applied. The midwestern and other predominantly agricultural states tended, of course, to focus on the problems of rural buildings and the loss of archeological sites. The more urbanized states, in discussing the nature of rural preservation problems, tended to approach the subject of rural preservation as a geographical extension of the urban preservation problem into the countryside. Outdoor recreation was considered a part of the problem rather than a resource, and the preservation of natural resources was generally regarded as a matter for other programs of the Department of the Interior.

Rural Preservation Problems: A Current Perspective

The preservation problems of the 1960s were very real, and the chances are excellent that if states were required to list their problems today, most of those recounted in that earlier period would resurface. Lightning still strikes, governments continue to invade and despoil with inappropriately located and badly designed projects (although today they would encounter greater difficulties

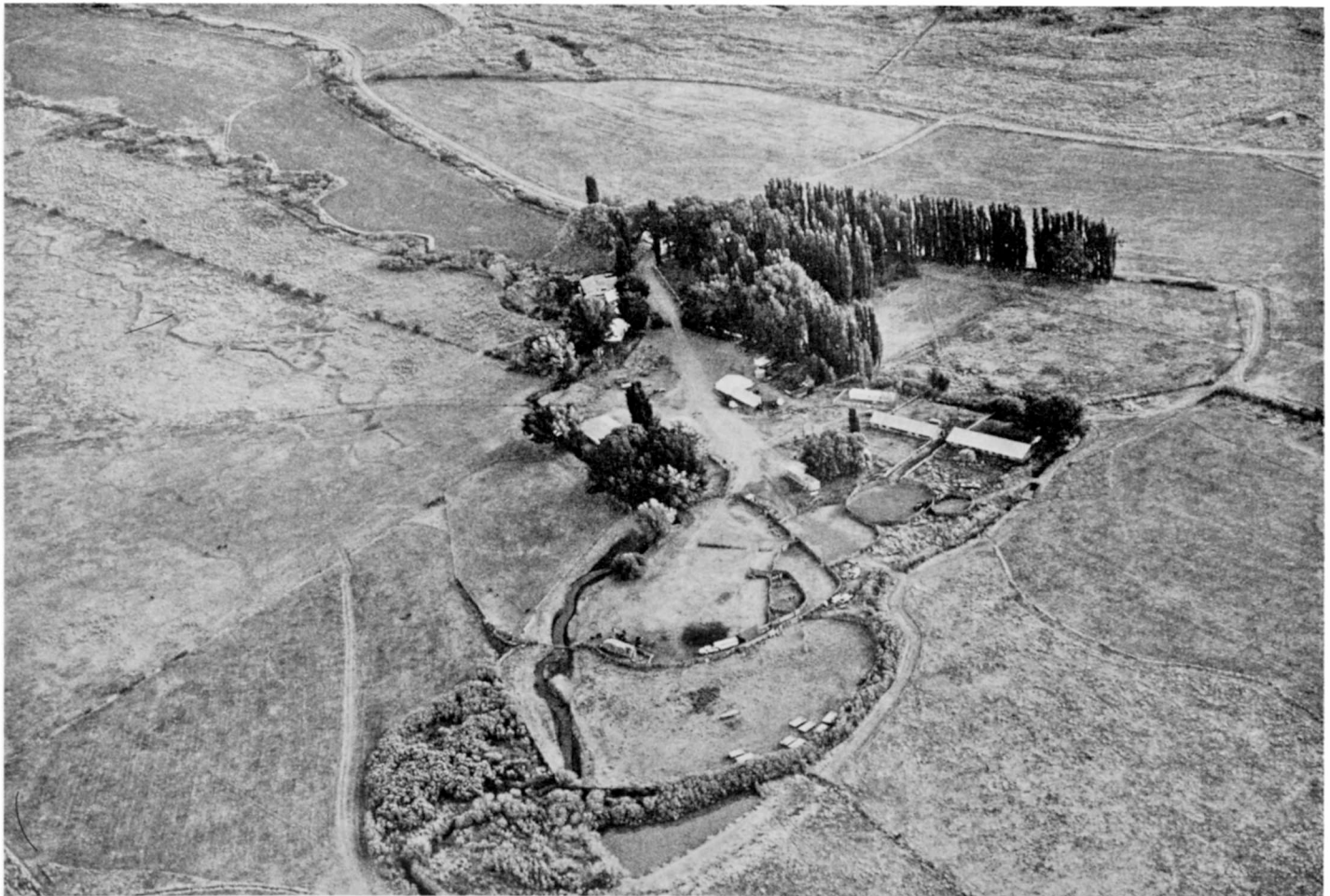


Photo: William Smock. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

The home ranch at the "96," Paradise Valley, Nevada. Much of the value of historic buildings derives from their larger physical and cultural context.

in doing so), the problems of inflation are now by any standard worse, and in the summer of 1980 we are in the midst of yet another recession. A moment's reflection tells us that very few of the rural preservation problems of the 1960s have been effectively solved. The old problems, by and large, still remain.

What *has* changed during the intervening years, perhaps, is the perspective of the preservation community about the proper limits of its concerns. Now a much more open, holistic view about the nature of preservation is widespread. While no less concerned than before about the fate of historic buildings and structures, many preservationists now accept that historic buildings do not exist in isolation and that much of their value derives from their larger physical and cultural context. Concern is no longer limited to high-style buildings, and vernacular buildings and traditions are widely regarded as having a special importance of their own. Interest in folkways and folklife is beginning to be regarded as a legitimate preservation concern in the United States, as it has been in Europe for many years. Fifteen years ago the American preservation community tended to concentrate on the artifact itself; now there is genuine concern for the social and human consequences of preservation as expressed in widespread discussion of such issues as "displacement" and "gentrification." The earlier notion of the "tout ensemble," an aspect of preservation once reserved for period neighborhoods in such cities as Charleston and New Orleans, has found new meaning in such terms as "townscape," and is applied with increasing frequency to areas of only moderate age, which are often altogether uncredentialed or only marginally so in terms of the architectural and historical criteria used in the 1950s and 1960s. And notwithstanding confusion about the precise meaning of such terms as "historic district" and "conservation area," the very fact that such distinctions are now sought to be drawn is evidence of a new perspective. The phrase "heritage conservation" pops up with increasing frequency as a modern equivalent for "historic preservation," and in 1978 the custodian of our national preservation effort, the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, became the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

The emergence of a broad new attitude in the American preservation community seems undeniable. If, as seems likely, we are on the edge of mounting a sustained, systematic attack on the problems of rural preservation, we will have to approach it in several ways and from several viewpoints. One task, of course, will be to continue to work toward solutions to the problems that appeared in our lists of 15 years ago. The other will be to have an open mind and a special regard not only for the new mood of the preservation community but also for the special problems likely to be encountered in rural areas, as distinct from those we have encountered in cities. Some of the most compelling problems may be grouped under such headings as defining and developing classification systems for rural resources, the governance of rural areas, rural conservation, poverty, planning, and the economics of rural preservation.

Defining Rural Resources

If we are to extend urban preservation and conservation efforts into the countryside and deal effectively with the problems of a total cultural and natural landscape, an



Photo: Arthur Hart, Idaho State Historical Society, 1978. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places.

Only a tavern sign recalls the historic role of the Murray County Courthouse during Idaho's gold-rush days. Many important mining claims were settled here from 1885 to 1898 when Murray was a booming county seat. Vernacular character, adapted uses, and changing economies often make rural, historic resources difficult to identify. The surveyor must look for the unexpected and the unlikely.

immediate and urgent problem is one of definition. We must ask ourselves three questions: 1) By what standards is a natural and cultural landscape to be identified, described, and evaluated? What equivalents of value may be reasonably applied to a stand of trees or a forest, a meadow, the quality of a lake or a stream, the totality of a valley landscape, and all the other elements we now believe to be important? 2) Can these values be sufficiently isolated and defined with enough precision to be useful in administering a wide range of national, state, and local preservation programs? 3) How do we approach the problem of ascribing qualities of national, state, or local significance to the elements of a rural landscape and the cultural traditions of rural areas?

While the urban preservation experience of the last decade tells us that the associative values of history and architecture are too limiting for the preservation of large rural areas, that experience does not tell us as a practical matter how far the net should be widened or what additional criteria will be required. It is likely, as a generality, that age, relative scarcity, and the extent to which the resource itself remains in an unspoiled condition will continue to be of central importance for most resource conservation programs. Beyond this—and it is a special danger in connection with the conservation of natural resources—one suspects that the principal criteria upon which most value judgments will be made are those that can most easily be scored numerically or described in "scientific" terms.

It is both ironic and disappointing, for example, that scenic values were dropped at an early stage in drafting the natural heritage legislation now pending in Congress, in favor of a more exclusionary, measurable approach.¹

¹ The article "Quality Landscapes: Preserving the National Heritage," by Frondort, McCarthy, and Zube, cited in the references at the end of this chapter, has a special relevance and poignancy in this respect. The subject of aesthetic values and preferences is one that has tended to be approached timidly by legislators, civil servants, and the courts in this country for many years. It is a special disappointment that such a vital aspect of rural character was passed over so early and so easily in the attempt to forge a new approach to rural conservation.

Useful typologies and classification systems for rural resources have, of course, already been developed. But it is still questionable whether those now in use—for example, those of the National Park Service for the management of natural and cultural resources under its jurisdiction—will have much transfer value or application to, say, a National Register of Natural Areas; and whether either or both will pose conflicts with criteria established for the National Register of Historic Places.

Once effective classification systems are developed, we must face the issue of *who* is to say what resources are important to preserve in rural areas. In the past, decisions about such matters have been regarded as the more or less exclusive province of historians, architectural historians, and archeologists. However, if our broader view of rural preservation is to include farmscapes, natural areas, wetlands, areas of ecological importance, landscapes, and plant materials—features of the rural landscape which unlike buildings are not constant over time but by their nature have the capacity to change and evolve—then we must consider which new faces will be admitted to the old preservation fraternity. It does not take much imagination to compile a list of potential candidates: cultural geographers, landscape architects, folk-life specialists, park and recreation planners, foresters, agronomists, specialists in environmental management and American studies, county agents, and many others.

It will be interesting to see whether and how well their methodologies, institutional and bureaucratic folkways, and their constituencies—most of them very different indeed from those of the traditional preservation community—can be meshed together.

To raise these matters of definition and classification—and, by implication, professional “turf”—is much more than a matter of idle, intellectual curiosity. All of these definitions in effect establish limits or boundaries for many different types of public and private decision: whether to list, certify, tax, regulate, spend, subsidize, invest, and so on. It is important that they be drawn with sufficient clarity and precision to be politically plausible, administratively useful, and legally defensible.

The Governance of Rural Areas

Assuming that the preceding issues will be resolved, the next important question is: What are the appropriate roles of national, state, and local governments in implementing rural preservation programs, involving as they inevitably must, programs of environmental review, the making of loans and grants, the designation or acquisition of land, the provision of tax subsidies and concessions, the conduct of mitigation procedures, and the regulation of private property—or some combination of all these approaches. Clearly, to one degree or another, all of the existing public preservation-conservation



Photo: William H. Tishler.

Who decides which resources in rural areas are valuable to save is a primary issue. As rural preservation broadens to include farmscapes, natural areas, wetlands, landscapes, and plant materials, other specialists must become more involved; these include cultural geographers, landscape architects, folklife specialists, park and recreation planners, foresters, agronomists, and experts in environmental management and American studies.

implementation techniques now used in urban areas will have some role to play in rural areas.

What must be remembered, however, is that a rural area is a distinctly different place from an urban area in many respects, including the availability of funds for preservation, access to specialized kinds of technical assistance—and, quite likely, a different mind-set about which public programs are important to undertake in the first place. The federal and state governments will undoubtedly continue to offer financial inducements for preservation and conservation, and the states will undoubtedly delegate some of the necessary regulatory and other powers to local governments. But having authority is one thing; willingness to use it is often another matter. What may readily be accepted in the city as reasonable restraints on the freedom to use one's property as one sees fit is less acceptable in rural areas. The enforcement of regulations of all kinds is more difficult in rural areas than in cities because of the larger geographical areas involved, and, in many cases, because of the lack of funds to employ sufficient numbers of enforcement personnel. If, as argued at the beginning of this chapter, rural preservation goals are best accomplished by local governments "closest to the people," there is an immediate and obvious discrepancy between what we want to do and the means to achieve it.

Finally, we have to ask whether the courts will accept for rural areas the legal rationales that underlie preservation restrictions in urban areas.

For example, the notion of "tout ensemble" or the character of a place as a whole as a basis for upholding aesthetic regulations has been viewed positively by the courts (sometimes directly and sometimes in an ancillary way) in urban historic districts. However, one has the uneasy feeling that both as to matters of proof in court and judicial reasoning, the concept might not hold up as well when applied to rural historic districts. In the case of public regulations which have the effect of limiting development to maintain the open character of rural areas, special questions will arise if they also appear to the courts to serve an exclusionary purpose.

Rural Conservatism

One essential difference between urban and rural populations is no more or less than a matter of attitude. Rural area residents tend on the whole to be much more conservative in their thinking than people who live in cities. Rural residents are usually independent, highly self-reliant, and much more willing to make do for themselves in many matters of everyday life than people who live in cities. People who live in the country have a strong attachment to the land and to landed traditions. They tend to be distrustful of all outsiders and especially distrustful of city folk. The rural attitude is one that is especially contemptuous of restrictions of any kind on the use of land, and even in areas where regulations do exist there is a strong disinclination to drive all the way to the county seat to obtain a permit to do anything.

Even such relatively simple and crude techniques of land use control as zoning present difficult problems of acceptance and enforcement for rural landowners and county commissioners alike. Regulations devised for the protection of landmark buildings in rural areas would generally be regarded as frivolous, and those designed for the protection of landscapes and natural resources

are viewed as interfering with the farmer's use of his land to make a living. Past experience everywhere tells that farmers by and large have a special kind of antagonism bordering on hate for the establishment of park and recreation facilities in their areas.

In all, it is difficult to conceive of achieving widespread solutions to many of the problems of rural conservation and preservation in the face of such attitudes. At the very least, public sector approaches will have to provide unusually attractive financial incentives, an absolute minimum of regulation, and iron-clad guarantees concerning privacy and the right to work the land for a living.

Poverty

Notwithstanding the recent "Back to the Country" trend in some areas, one of the underlying difficulties in rural preservation in many places is the fact of a declining economic base. In some areas, abject, bottom-line poverty is a permanent way of life for many rural residents. As the "trickle-down" theory of housing has often demonstrated in urban areas, those least capable of preserving



Photo: Walter Smalling, Jr.

One of the underlying difficulties in rural preservation in many places is the fact of a declining economic base. In some areas, abject, bottom-line poverty is a permanent way of life for many rural residents.

or rehabilitating an old building are in the position of most needing to do it. The problem is no different in rural areas. While the oldest housing may be best from an architectural perspective or the preservationist's standpoint, it also often tends to be occupied by the poorest people. If, through a humanitarian concern that all citizens are entitled to safe, sanitary, and decent housing as a matter of national policy, what do we, as preservationists, say to the rural family that chooses to leave a tumble-down Greek Revival farmhouse to abandonment and decay for the better environment of a new mobile home? Ultimately, one must ask who benefits from rural preservation, and of what value an architecturally important house situated in a handsome rural landscape is to a starving farm family.

The problem becomes especially troublesome when one asks how, in the face of such poverty, the preservation and conservation of natural and cultural resources and the provision of recreational opportunities can even be made to appear as desirable goals for local government.

In a democracy, the individual problems of poverty surface in a collective way at the level of county governments, where public funds for even the basic services usually provided by these units of government—roads, schools, welfare, and social services—are hard to come by. As public priorities, historic preservation, recreation, and the protection of natural resources still stand very low on the local totem pole of public priorities.

Planning Considerations

In a rational world, one would think that intelligent planning could resolve many of the inherent conflicts between preservation on one hand and development on the other. "Planning technology" (for want of a better term) has indeed improved during the last 15 years. There are now sophisticated, computer-assisted techniques for calculating the economic and physical holding capacity of land in rural areas—whether what is held is residents, cows, tourists, or important natural resources. Space-age, remote sensing techniques now available provide a better view of the land itself, and elaborate mathematical models have even been developed for assessing such intangible values as the aesthetic quality of rural landscapes. Data input for planning is better and easier to come by than ever before.

The other side of the coin is that the record of long-range physical planning as a means of achieving the most productive and agreeable spatial arrangement and distribution of land uses—plans that are absolutely fundamental to all attempts to preserve the countryside—is not all that good in the United States. Many such plans are prepared by planners who are urbanists at heart and to whom rural areas are those places to which trailer courts and noxious industries are banished, or to whom the countryside is viewed as nothing more than a place of accommodation for expanding urban populations. It is no answer to suggest that university planning schools should produce more rural planners. Planning schools, like the profession itself, are somewhat trendy. They follow new social imperatives rather than lead them, and the introduction of new courses and curricula in any university is a slow and difficult process in any event. A more practical and immediately useful approach might be to inquire how existing programs in landscape architecture, agriculture, and environmental management

may be induced to strengthen the number and content of course offerings in rural planning as part of their present programs.

Moreover, these long-range plans are not self-executing. They rely heavily on uncompensated regulation, most often in the form of a zoning ordinance, for their implementation. By comparison with cities, rural areas tend to lag far behind in the acceptance or effective implementation of such controls. Cities have had some success in controlling the location and timing of new private development through the selective extension of public water, sewer, and other necessary services to induce or promote growth in some areas and inhibit it in others, but these techniques are by and large less practical in rural areas. A few of the more promising tools for controlling growth such as development rights transfers may also be applied in rapidly-developing rural areas close to large cities, but in more remote rural counties their usefulness is also limited.



Photo: St. Gil. Courtesy of Documerica, Environmental Protection Agency.

Abandoned autos along the Mississippi River in Louisiana defile the natural landscape.

Another view of planning is that it is a useful device for obtaining a measure of coordination in the provision of public facilities and service programs at both intra- and inter-governmental levels. Here, too, success is elusive. County governments will often show little reluctance to tear down an architecturally significant courthouse if the site is needed for a new government center, a county health clinic, or a parking lot for employees. Coordinating preservation objectives with the purposes and programs of other levels of government is also difficult. For example, the rural housing programs of the Farmers Home Administration sometimes result in the abandonment of older, rural farmhouses and their replacement by shining new tract homes with all their modern conveniences. Many other instances of conflicting policies at the state and federal level could be cited.

Economic Considerations

At heart, the preservation of buildings and landscapes in rural areas is an economic problem, just as it is in cities. In both, at times of economic prosperity and rising real estate values, there are inexorable pressures on the

owner of a historic building to tear down the structure and replace the old use with a more profitable one as soon as the value of the site exceeds that of the structure. In the opposite situation, where real estate markets are stagnant and net investment income from the building is less than its owner requires, it is lost to abandonment and decay. It is for this reason that the preservation of historic buildings and landscapes presents one set of problems in wealthy areas like Westchester County, New York, or Aspen, Colorado, and an opposite set of problems in such poor areas as Duplin County, North Carolina.

Underlying this problem is a uniquely American attitude about land. Deeply ingrained in our history and traditions, it assumes that land is essentially a marketable commodity, the principal purpose of which is its sale or development as a means of providing capital gains or current income for its temporary owner. Land is not yet widely regarded as a finite resource to be conserved and protected. While we like to think that rural landowners and farmers have a sentimental attachment to the land (and they often do), almost everyone has his price and the farmer who needs a retirement income is no less apt to give in to the developer who wants his land for subdivision development than he is to the industry that seeks to exploit its mineral content. My perspective is that where matters of money are concerned, the urge to develop will continue to outweigh the conservation ethic.

It has been said that trying to put social and economic policy in place through planning is like trying to nail a chiffron pie to a wall. This may be true, but until the underlying economic questions related to the operation of real estate markets are addressed, and balanced solutions conceived and put into operation, those who seek to preserve rural areas will continue to face an uphill struggle.

The Future of Rural Preservation

Only a fool or a knave would attempt to predict the eventual outcome of our new-found concern for the conservation and preservation of rural America. While we have successfully dealt with some of the historic preservation problems we identified many years ago, both our perspective on those problems and the context in which we now approach them have changed markedly in the last decade. Now we confront a number of new and frightening prospects for the future, not the least of which is the problem of energy self-sufficiency, with all the special implications it has for the preservation of rural areas.

That the traditional historic preservation community has expanded its horizons is encouraging. The sites, buildings, structures, and objects that were the focus of our attention 15 years ago are no less important than before, but we now see them in a larger context, and we have developed something of a social conscience, accepting human values and aspirations equally with artifacts. This, in my view, is progress.

Whether the problems of rural preservation in this larger context can be effectively managed in the long run, however, seems to me to boil down to a question of whether or not old-line preservation interests in federal, state, and local governments and in the private sector can join with other rural interests with equally legitimate and in some cases more long-standing concern and expertise in confronting the problems of rural areas than

ourselves. The other side of this question, of course, is the extent to which those whose rural concerns center on recreation and natural resources can wholeheartedly and openly embrace the protection of cultural resources as essential to the accomplishment of *their* strategies. There is a question—a serious one—of how many interests can stand under one umbrella and stay dry. Just as the members of the Victorian Society may have little interest in matters pertaining to archeology and prehistory, environmentalists who are concerned about snail darters or whales do not necessarily share the concerns of wilderness campers. On balance, however, my view is that the merger of historic preservation, natural area conservation, and recreation interests was a giant step forward. Success in any venture depends on first asking the right questions in the right order and in looking as broadly as possible at the problem. The marriage of related concerns can only be beneficial for rural areas in the long run, especially as a new view of the problem filters down to the states, and to local governments.

Threats to the integrity of the American landscape and its cultural, natural, and recreational assets are greater than ever before. That there is already an “environmental backlash”—partly as a consequence of our own success—is already evident. There is a high probability that we are in for a prolonged period of slow national economic growth, and this will inevitably result in diminished resources for preservation and conservation. Taking the long view, it seems likely that 5 or 10 years from now the preservation-conservation-recreation community—and the countryside—are going to need all the allies and all the help they can muster.

This new community of common interests will doubtless undergo periods of uncertainty and anxiety as it tries to define its boundaries; new partnerships rarely come easily. It is going to have to continue to sharpen its skills in dealing with the economics of preservation, not only with respect to historic buildings but with such underlying issues as open space protection, farmland retention, watershed management, and land value taxation as well. The historic preservation community has shown a special adroitness in the private sector in devising new approaches to saving buildings through adaptive use with its inherent concern for profit. It has been done successfully in cities, and with imagination it surely can be done in the country. Rural preservation interests of all kinds are going to have to become more aggressively involved with rural land use planning issues, and they will have to remind themselves from time to time that urban and rural areas are mutually dependent on one another.

To argue that we must blend our individual concerns to form stronger institutional and political alliances does not deny the importance of maintaining and strengthening our skills in areas that have traditionally been our own. Broadening our horizons does not imply that the associative values of history and architecture must become less important or less relevant. Our special concerns can only be strengthened by learning what we can from the wider spectrum of rural interests about which we are presently almost totally ignorant and all too often completely indifferent.

All of us who seek to deal with rural preservation in its broad sense will have to become better compromisers than we now are, for in the long run the refrain “separate, parallel, and equal,” heard so frequently as the

new heritage legislation makes its way to and through the Congress, will simply not be good enough.

Our view of the problem is important in another respect. One approach to problem solving that has always seemed to me to have special value is the study of failure. Our historic preservation and conservation literature is replete with case studies and reports of successful outcomes, usually accompanied with "before and after" photographs. Rarely, however, do we pursue the study of our failures with equal zeal. Asking the question "What went wrong?" is often embarrassing and always time-consuming, especially when new crises seem to arise every day. Equal attention to the causes of past failures might be helpful.

Having in this summer of 1980 observed the very real pressure in Congress for reductions in federal funds for historic preservation—serious enough in dollar terms and disastrous when adjusted for inflation—it follows that progress in rural preservation will increasingly depend on the extent to which the powers, leadership capabilities, and money of state and local governments can be

brought to bear on the problem. Sadly, we are as far from the implementation of a comprehensive national land use policy now as ever before. Some states do, however, show signs of reasserting their interest in rural planning and conservation issues—Hawaii, California, Oregon, Florida, and Vermont, among others. While this is helpful, the real measure of success will be the degree to which local governments in rural areas and private interests can come together to protect and preserve what is, after all, closest to home. This suggests that there is a vast educational and promotional effort yet to be undertaken locally in rural areas—an effort no different in scope and content than the educational effort mounted two decades ago by the historic preservation community, which has made "historic preservation" a household term. It can be done in rural areas if we care enough, and if we are sufficiently clever and aggressive.

That the cultural, natural, and recreational preservation communities have begun to see the light, and that such a book as this can emerge as a point of beginning is an auspicious start—but it is *only* a beginning.

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Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina. He is the draftsman of many state and local preservation statutes and ordinances. He received the Secretary of the Interior's Distinguished Conservation Service Award in 1978, and the Ruth Coltrane Cannon Award from the North Carolina Association for the Preservation of Antiquities in 1973. In 1968–1969 he was a Senior Fulbright Research Scholar at the University of London investigating problems of historic preservation, amenity planning, and countryside conservation in England. Presently his teaching includes courses in planning law, community design policy, historic preservation planning and law, and the legal aspects of landscape conservation.

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Chapter 3.

The Role of Historic Preservation in Tomorrow's Rural Landscape

by William H. Tishler

Historically, Americans have had a romantic attachment to the countryside. Early on, the philosophies of people like Jefferson and Thoreau began to foster a distinct anti-urban tradition and a preference for a rural way of life in the public mind that even today is popularized by such widely-read literature as the *Foxfire* books, the *Mother Earth News*, the "Whole Earth Catalogs," and the delightfully illustrated books on early American rural life by Eric Sloane. Rural America has played an important role in forming our national values. Indeed, a hallmark of the American Dream and the basis for much of our settlement history has been a continuing strong desire for land ownership and the independence of rural farm living. As America enters its third century, visions and dreams of the rural countryside still arouse our deepest emotions and our sense of identity with places that seem more stable and assuring.

We know that the landscape in its natural state and as modified by man has always served as both a window and a mirror to our culture. Over the years, as our national values have coalesced from the great cultural diversity of our past, and spread geographically, the built American environment has come to look more and more homogeneous. The loss of characteristic regional identities has taken place much faster in urban areas than the rural countryside where isolation and tradition have tempered the forces of change. The rural American landscape still possesses a great wealth of vernacular artifacts and symbols of our agricultural heritage that include what the National Trust in its book, *America's Forgotten Architecture* (1976), describes as "probably the most diverse elements of the built environment." In fact, according to the distinguished geographer Fred Kniffen,



Photo: William H. Tishler.

A meaningful program of rural preservation should place great importance on preserving the best remaining examples of vernacular architecture, such as this large barn of stovewood construction near Bailey's Harbor, Wisconsin.

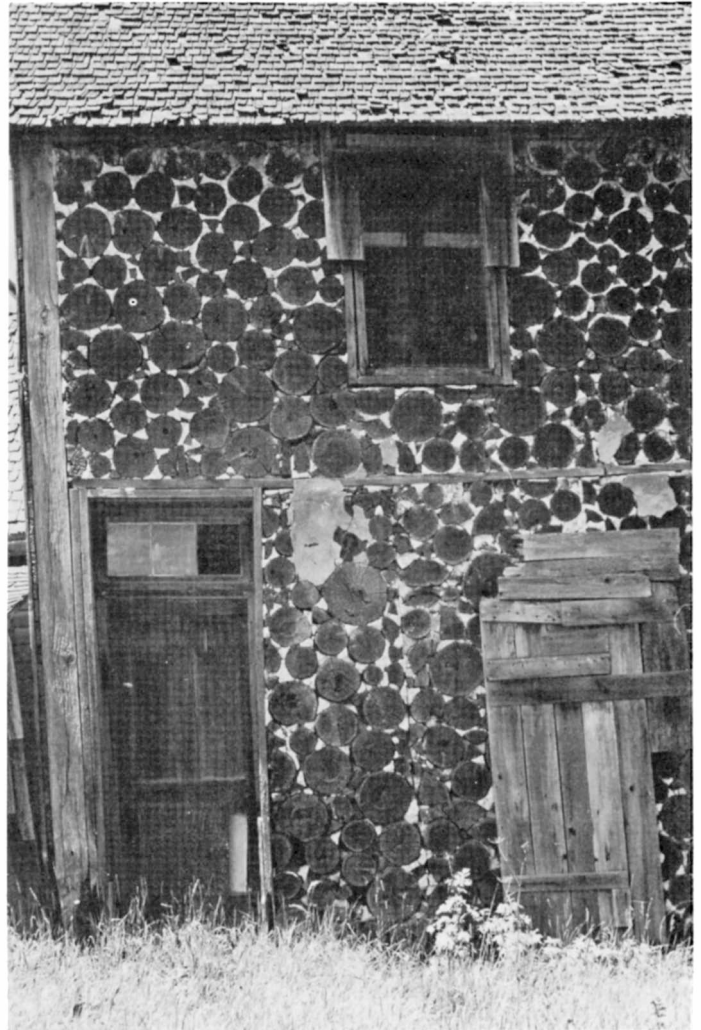


Photo: William H. Tishler.

Detail of stovewood barn near Bailey's Harbor, Wisconsin.

the unsung humble buildings that are an integral part of the rural American landscape and are "by reason of their adherence to type and numerical superiority . . . far more important as markers of basic cultural processes than are uniquely designed individual structures." This landscape beyond the urban fringe actually symbolizes a vast reservoir of cultural resources that represents America's heritage from our rural beginnings. But its importance has never been widely acknowledged. Thus, historic preservation must have a strong voice in the planning policies that shape the future of rural areas. The purpose of this chapter is to explore some of the issues and methods for this broad scope of preservation involvement.

Historic Preservation and the Changing Countryside

The American preservation movement generally has not really understood the problems of rural America, nor has it emerged as a vital force for preservation action in the countryside. Perhaps this lack of effectiveness in rural areas is due to the fact that historic preservation activity has strong roots in the eastern states. Its philosophy and approach traditionally have been urban, primarily because much of the eastern United States has become a region of cities and city dwellers. Even today, the typical preservationist is likely to be an urbanite—a fact substantiated by a recent survey which found that more than 72 percent of the membership in the National Trust for Historic Preservation live in urban and suburban areas. These circumstances have molded a preservation philosophy that has focused primarily upon buildings rather than environments or landscapes—a philosophy that has often been criticized for being elitist because of its strong orientation toward prestigious architectural monuments.



Photo: William H. Tishler.

Vast, new industrial complexes occupy land once undeveloped, totally changing the character of the environment.

This preservation ethic has not always recognized the inseparable relationship between the landscape and historic resources, and that historic features of rural America take their essential character from their setting and the influence of the surrounding landscape.

Yet in spite of our deep attachment to the countryside with its familiar landscapes, structures, and traditions, a revolution is underway that is reshaping the face of rural America. The forces of change are essentially twofold: farms and farmland acreage are declining significantly, while mechanization and a penchant for bigness are dramatically altering the size and form of those farms that remain. During 1977, existing farmland declined by almost 2.7 million acres. This represents about 4,200 square miles, or an area almost the size of Connecticut, that was converted to highways, airports, flood control projects, and recreation and wilderness areas. At the present rate, according to Soil Conservation Service studies, 120 million additional acres will be taken for urban development by the year 2000. A third of that will be cropland.

To survive, the American farmer is fast becoming an industrialist who oversees an increasingly capital intensive, technologically sophisticated, mass-production business. To be efficient, such agricultural methods require highly mechanized techniques on considerably larger landholdings. As a result, small farmers are rapidly leaving the land as large-scale operations become the hallmark of modern farming. A far different rural America is emerging from these violent forces and the time grows short for preservationists to share their concerns, values, and contributions in the battle to shape the countryside of the future.

The New Visual Environment of Rural America

How are these changes influencing the form and content of the rural landscape and what does the new farming operation look like? From a regional perspective, consolidation and mechanization are bringing a striking change in scale to the organization of both the land and the built objects on it. As the number of farms decreases, the number of abandoned and obsolete buildings increases. Deserted farmsteads with empty houses and sagging barns have become a familiar part of the rural scene. When fire, decay, or the bulldozer reclaim them, and the surrounding trees, hedgerows and woodlots are removed, our entire perception of scale changes as open spaces become more vast and devoid of objects of known and familiar size.

The artificial topography of landscapes remodeled for cultivation will become increasingly obvious as farmers and agricultural corporations use new machines to dramatically shape the earth to suit their needs. In parts of the American West and Midwest, the traditional square and rectangular shape of the land is giving way to large circles, the result of new irrigation machines that sweep across the ground in huge circular patterns. The entire visual composition of fields and buildings established during the small, family farm era will change and assume giant-like proportions that will not include the diversity of animals, crop types, and the familiar "edges" that have provided the enclosure and spatial interest for our views of the land. While lacking visual interest, human scale, tree buffers, and a relationship to familiar objects, these new agricultural landscapes are ideally suited to the function and economy of the large, powerful, and highly mobile machines of today's modern farm.



Photo: William H. Tishler.

New buildings of design, materials, and use different from the old substantially alter the landscape.

At the farmstead—the associated buildings making up the center of the farm—awesome changes are also occurring. The American farmer has expressed his pride, ingenuity, and vernacular innovation here since the earliest settlers began to cultivate crops. Each farmstead became a statement about the uniqueness of its builder and user as well as the expression of a myriad of decisions regarding function, building and ethnic traditions, materials, costs, and such environmental factors as topography, access, microclimate, and sources of water. With the

house and barn acting as basic reference points, numerous smaller structures were designed and sited in response to the requirements of producing, storing, and processing crops and livestock.

Now, like the surrounding agricultural landscape, mechanization and new engineering concepts are changing the form of farm structures. The observer of today's modern farmstead is likely to find the architectural monotony of standardized and prefabricated barns, sheds, and silos. The ageless, owner-built, wooden building has become the victim of economics, and has been replaced by concrete blocks, metal, and plastic. Fewer buildings are found on modern farms, and their larger, lower configuration is decidedly different. Their new low silhouette, in the words of J.B. Jackson, an astute observer of America's rural regions, is "...showing a preference for the horizontal over the vertical organization of space." Their functions also have changed in that the buildings are essentially machines that process their contents in what is becoming a totally engineered artificial environment. Perhaps the most obvious victim of the changing farmstead is the American frame barn. This impressive structure has always been central to our image of the farm, but it is becoming obsolete and with few exceptions will vanish from tomorrow's agricultural landscape. American farmsteads are a significant element in the settlement fabric of our country. Yet, as with other forms of anonymous architecture, we have given them little serious attention in our historic preservation efforts. The development of a meaningful rural preservation program should place high priority on procedures for preserving some of our best remaining examples.

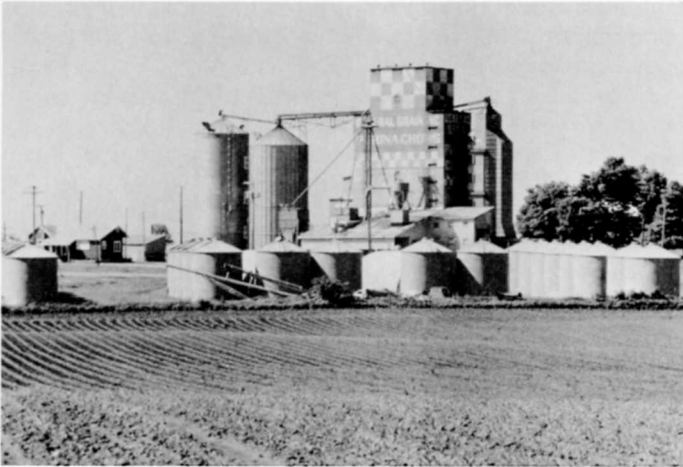


Photo: William H. Tishler.

Older farm structures are being replaced by modern machinery and ubiquitous metal and concrete structures.



Photo: William H. Tishler.

The American frame barn is the most obvious victim of changing farming techniques and development pressures.

A Bold Challenge for Preservation Planning

If we lose these visible reminders of our rural heritage, we will have lost an important part both of ourselves and of our roots to the land that have sustained us from time immemorial. But preserving the best of our agrarian past is a bold and difficult task because we must conserve sizeable portions of the land itself. It is the landscape that provides the scale, setting, and basic agricultural activities associated with the rural environment. Geographer Pierce Lewis stated the extent of this problem quite well when he wrote: "What I think preservationists ought to worry about seriously is the preservation of large chunks of antique landscape . . . whole townships in Michigan or New York State . . . half a county in Texas or Arkansas or Iowa."

In conserving the meaningful cultural landscapes of rural America, we must utilize planning methods that address combinations of natural and manmade environments, for beyond the urban fringe, the two really become inseparable. We must be prepared to deal with a much larger scale, with broader areas, and with a lower density of human-built resources. We can't ignore the unbuilt landscape itself, for it is open space that forms the essential quality of our perceptions of rural America. It is open space that is vital for maintaining the traditional man/land relationships of our historic agricultural areas, farmsteads, small towns, cemeteries, battlefields, ghost towns, mines, trails, and camps.

At this monumental scale, historic preservation must become an integral component of a broader land use planning process that can address the management of our cultural as well as natural resources. Effective rural preservation efforts must address the complex and multifaceted issues of land use, urban sprawl, preservation of agricultural land, and conservation of natural resources. Other difficult problems include but are not limited to the following: the complexities of working with the vast size of rural areas, particularly when undertaking historic resource surveys; the need to recognize and manage landscapes with significant ties between natural and cultural resources; the need for a better understanding and greater appreciation of rural vernacular and folk architectural resources; and the meaningful involvement of the grassroots citizenry from the diverse cultural landscapes of rural America—a process complicated by their independent nature, special values, and traditions.

New Approaches for Rural Preservation

To address these problems, preservationists working in the rural landscape must be prepared to develop new approaches to planning, and to modify existing planning procedures that have been established and proven for urban America.

Surveys and survey methods represent one planning related activity where better techniques are desperately needed, since traditional on-site inventory methods are simply too time consuming, expensive, and cumbersome for large rural areas. For example, recent advances in technology now permit us to utilize innovations in airborne and ground-level remote sensing techniques—assisted by photogrammetric and computer systems—to survey large land areas quickly and with relatively little cost. This technology can also enable us to detect features not readily visible at ground level; allow us access

to remote areas; and provide us with the ability to record large-scale phenomena of the rural, cultural landscape.

Black-and-white aerial photography is the remote sensor traditionally used in environmental resource surveys. Its convenience and relatively low cost makes it a useful presurvey aid in screening remote areas for later, more detailed surveys. State Soil Conservation Service offices provide good air photo coverage and have access to photographs dating back to the early 1930s for many parts of the country. When used under binocular, high-powered magnification, this imagery can be used to determine the location of such historic resources as buildings, bridges, early fence types, quarries, lime kilns, mine shafts, dams, cemeteries, shipwrecks, and abandoned travel corridors and settlements.

Aerial infrared imagery has even made it possible to obtain survey data not discernible to the naked eye. It has been used to identify abandoned roads and sub-surface details such as buried foundations when buried objects and other forms of human occupation have disrupted the natural soil profile or have influenced the vigor of vegetation on the ground surface. Because the health of plant life is directly related to the amount of infrared radiation detected from it, compacted or disturbed flora, or buried objects covered by vegetation such as grass, appear in different tones on infrared photos.

Once historic structures are located by photography, their identification, verification, and authentication can be complicated by modern siding materials that hide significant design or construction features. Recent advances in X-ray technology have led to the development of compact portable units which can be used in the field to examine structures. As a result, rural building systems of log, stovewood, or half-timber construction hidden by new siding materials can be identified and their condition ascertained.

The contributions of photography to surveys does not end with locating resources and recording their physical condition. Maps can be delineated quickly using photogrammetric methods. Precise measurements from photographic images can also be used to compute size in preparing measured drawings of historic structures and sites. Photographs can also be used for drawing elevations when buildings are inaccessible or too difficult and detailed for efficient measurement by conventional methods. Computer-drawn perspectives from any desired vantage point can also be made from data generated during the plotting operation.

Rural historic preservation must also develop better procedures for dealing with the great variety of traditional rural structures. These include buildings and groups of buildings relating to residential, agricultural, industrial, transportation, commercial, and civic uses. Such buildings exist in towns, hamlets, and remote areas, and may represent significant patterns of American folk architecture. Historic preservation has largely overlooked these architectural resources unless they are related to important people or events. Perhaps this has occurred because preservation has relied upon traditional approaches to architectural history based on the styles and periods of our nation's more formal and pretentious buildings.

Preservationists must now turn to the work of cultural geographers, folklorists, and others who have long been

working with anonymous folk architecture. While less concerned with style, they have studied buildings from the standpoint of typological characteristics based on floor plans, layouts, and forms derived from custom and use. Significant aspects of their work will be synthesized and mapped for the forthcoming structures section of "The Cultural Patterns of North America: A Cartographic Anthology," which is being sponsored by the Society for the North American Cultural Survey. These efforts can provide new meaning and potential for historic preservationists working with the built features of the rural cultural landscape.



Photo: William H. Tishler.

The rural landscape possesses a wealth of American folk architecture such as this crossroads general store and saloon near Lennox, Wisconsin. Studies by cultural geographers and folklorists, which examine the topological and functional characteristics of such buildings, offer the preservationist valuable information for evaluating the rural environment.

Since maintaining an unspoiled landscape represents an important preservation planning objective for the rural environment, historic preservation efforts must become familiar with the land itself and its inherent natural processes. Such endeavors can lead to a better understanding of the close relationship that can exist between preserving historic as well as natural resources, for in rural areas these features often are closely linked. This approach to preservation can then become part of a broader planning effort that establishes a rationale for keeping open space undeveloped for ecological as well as cultural-historic reasons. Few historic preservationists can acquire the in-depth knowledge and skills needed to understand and manage natural resource systems adequately, and they should be prepared to contribute to the interdisciplinary efforts necessary for planning the natural and historic-cultural resources of large rural areas. Occasionally they may even coordinate them. These individuals could become a much needed voice for historic preservation in the broader and more established environmental movement.

The failure of the historic preservationist to become actively involved in rural land use planning will only result in a continuation of traditional planning efforts and methodologies which often disregard and in many cases even obliterate historic resources. This destruction

occurs as the end product of recreation planning, park development, wilderness preservation, flood control, land reclamation, and other programs where environmental policies are established that restore and manage natural resources, but in the process also obliterate our history.

Effective citizen involvement in rural historic preservation is absolutely critical, not only to better understand the rural environment, but also to facilitate the acceptance of preservation proposals. The completeness of rural area surveys, and the elimination of traditional survey evaluation biases can be assisted by giving local citizens an opportunity to participate in the identification and evaluation of locally significant resources.

One such effort, the Critical Resources Information Program (CRIP), initiated by the University of Wisconsin's Department of Landscape Architecture, shows great promise for historic preservation. With the help of county agents from the university's extension service, a series of county-by-county workshops were organized throughout the state. The workshops involved concerned citizens, local organizations, and governmental officials who were organized into separate subgroups to focus on various resource types, including historic features. Using nominal group decisionmaking techniques, each subgroup developed lists of areas and resources that were potentially critical to their county. A relative priority was assigned to the listed items, and they were then described and mapped. Subsequently, a detailed report summarizing the results for each county was published for local distribution. In some cases a second workshop was held to consider both general and site specific planning and preservation alternatives for each resource type, and to explore local values regarding the feasibility and acceptance of these alternatives.

These sessions have been quite successful in determining how rural people perceive and value a broad spectrum of local historic features. They have provided worthwhile insights into the nagging question of how to determine "local" significance for historic resources, particularly where they may be eligible for National Register listing. They have also generated a great deal of useful information to supplement the preservation survey and inventory data gathered by professionals in the state's historic preservation office.

The Rural Historic Landscape and the Future

The rural countryside is an inseparable part of our national character and heritage. It provides the sustenance and the rich backdrop for the settlements where most of us live. Yet, the future of rural America is presently confronted with awesome new developments that can change the character of entire regions.

If historic preservation is to establish credibility as a viable force in shaping the future rural landscape, it must adapt its scope and methods to become a more active and effective partner in the land use planning process. It must utilize both landscape and cultural resources to create better physical environments. It can benefit by learning from procedures already widely used in natural resource planning. In fact, to be effective in the countryside, tomorrow's new breed of preservation planner might very likely have a background in both natural and cultural resource planning. This combination of conservation and preservation expertise could be established

from training in landscape planning, cultural geography, and traditional historic preservation—a departure from current preservation education programs, most of which have a strong urban emphasis drawn from the traditional fields of architecture, architectural history, and history. Because the field of landscape architecture has made significant contributions toward natural resource management, and design and planning methods, and carries a broad concern for the cultural environment, it may be the most appropriate discipline for developing this new and vitally important historic preservation academic program.

The task is not an easy one for preservationists. But this is the leadership and the direction that conserving historic and cultural rural landscapes will require in the future.



Photo: William H. Tishler.

To be effective, rural conservation must achieve the preservation of natural features and the built environment.

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Chapter 4.

The Vanishing Swimming Hole: Policy and Planning Perspectives on Rural Recreation

by Ellen Ruth Reiss

Recreation resources and experiences are an integral part of life in rural America. Together they form a mosaic consisting of natural landscape features; a wide variety of pastimes, colorful events, and attractions; and developed and undeveloped recreation facilities. The image of the countryside as that place where people—urban and rural—literally recreate themselves is deeply ingrained both in our literature and in our images of ourselves as a nation.

But what is rural recreation? What part does it play in the lives of visitors and residents? Consider the following:

- It is autumn; two hunters sit in a Minnesota duckblind waiting for the first rush of wild migrating fowl.
- Three laughing teenagers leap from a worn tire hanging on a maple tree into a swimming hole of a New England river.
- A hiker rests a packframe against a trail marker along the Appalachian Trail. Consulting a trail guide in his pack, he calculates how far to the next shelter.
- A rubber raft filled with 12 adventurers rushes and bounces over the rapids of a Colorado river, chasing a flotilla of four similar rafts toward a destination at an eddy further down river.
- In a private campground in Arkansas, a semicircle of recreational vehicles mark the end of a day's roaming for travelers from several states. The aroma of charcoal fires permeates the fields and lakes beyond the enclave of campers.
- On the streets of a small country town in Indiana at dusk, uniformed kids pedal furiously to make Little League practice on time at the Jaycee Rec Field.
- Five members of a North Dakota Senior Citizens' Center diligently research thick volumes in a community library for old town records to include in a local history publication.
- A Scout leader guides his group single file through a snow-covered stand of fir on the first leg of a winter camping trip. The excited scouts maneuver ungainly showshoes over the unfamiliar terrain.

These examples depict a few glimpses of what rural recreation is. The need for recreation in rural areas, some of the problems associated with successfully providing it, and an outline of basic concepts for planning recreation while at the same time preserving rural areas are discussed below.

The Need for Recreation

Community surveys conducted by extension services and by planning agencies in nonmetropolitan areas consistently rank recreation among the top 10 priorities and frequently among the top 5. The availability of recrea-

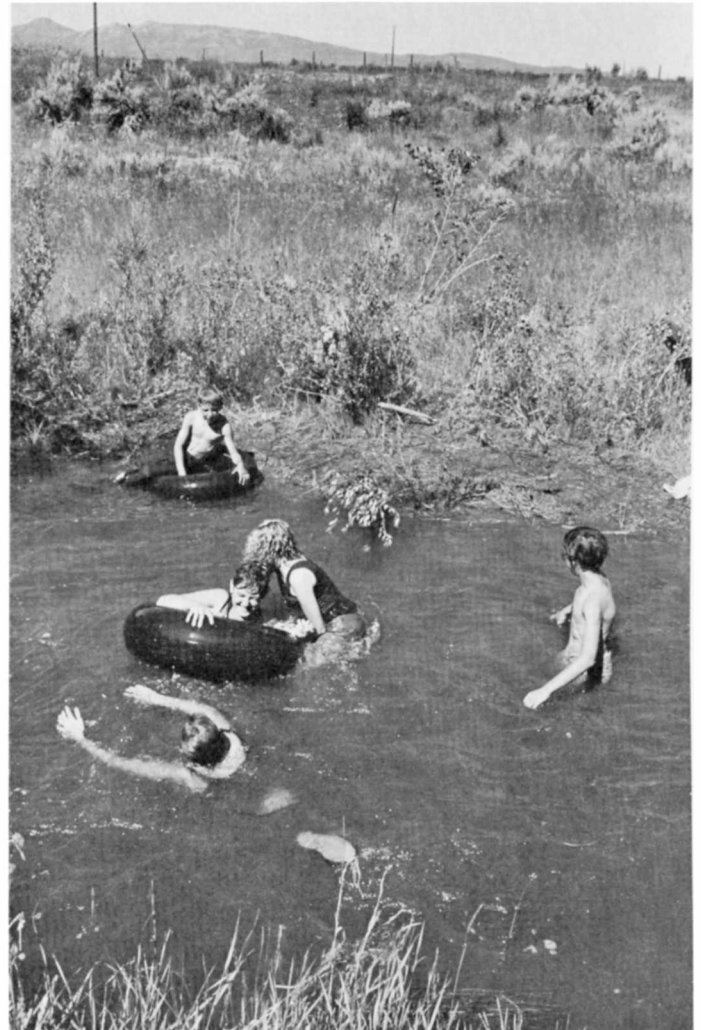


Photo: Carl Fleischhauer. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Swimming in Cottonwood Creek, Paradise Valley, Nevada.

tion opportunities, unspoiled natural beauty, and overall environmental quality are often cited as major reasons why people migrate to rural areas and why businesses relocate in nonmetropolitan areas and small towns. Economic studies completed over the years consistently indicate recreation provides jobs and personal income, and in turn creates revenues for state and local governments. Recreation is a major industry and in some states the preeminent one.

Nevertheless, the need for rural recreation is often contested. For many people, the very diversity of rural

recreation opportunities, along with personal values about the nature of recreation, makes any kind of consensus about recreational needs difficult. Many believe that rural residents already have unlimited recreation opportunities through hunting, fishing, picnicking, and snowmobiling despite mounting evidence that rural land conversion, posting of private land, and the rising cost of gasoline are substantially reducing these opportunities.



Photo: Carl Fleischhauer. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Gospel singing, Fitzgerald, Georgia.

Many forget, as other studies have demonstrated, that rural residents, like their urban counterparts, want and need a variety of recreational experiences. Some argue that the presence of large private and public land holdings—national and state parks, federal forests and wilderness areas, water impoundments, open-range lands, and long-distance trails—satisfy most of the local demands for recreation. For others, rural recreation opportunities are synonymous with resorts and tourist attractions, or are defined simply as outdoor activities and “sports.” But the existence of the resort facilities and attractions and the fact that rural people work at them does not mean that the rural residents’ needs for local recreation are satisfied. Further, to view recreation simply as a matter of sport ignores the needs of many segments of the population: the elderly, the handicapped and the poor, and those who have no taste for or have no capability to perform strenuous physical activity.

Most important, these narrow views implicitly ignore historic preservation as an essential aspect of recreation. It is generally accepted that many recreation trips involve more than one purpose. For example, a family camping trip may be combined with a tour of both natural and cultural resources: visits to historic houses, forts, archeological sites, “living farm” museums, as well as visits to developed campgrounds and scenic areas. All available evidence suggests strongly that cultural resources are an essential part of the recreation experience for a vast and growing segment of the total population, urban and rural alike.

Research conducted by the Farmers Home Administration and several state agencies and universities suggests also that recreation may mean something quite different to the residents of rural communities than it does to urban dwellers, and that there are distinct differences in recreation preferences between newcomers to rural areas

and small communities and those rural residents of longer standing.

Notwithstanding its importance, there is growing reason to believe that many recreation resources are beginning to vanish and that access to rural recreation experiences and facilities can no longer be taken for granted. Many swimming holes are polluted or have become inaccessible because of development. Land along the Appalachian Trail has suffered encroachment from subdivisions and other incompatible development. Free flowing rivers have been impounded to create sources for hydroelectric power or for flood control, and with rising gasoline prices many private campground operators are closing their gates. Historic buildings in rural areas that might be renovated to provide comfortable, contemporary housing, or that might be restored to provide delightful recreational experiences for visitors stand empty and open to the weather and vandals, and to the hazards of lightning, fire, and destruction.

Finally, inflation has affected recreation in sometimes subtle ways. Rural residents, who are the nation’s major repository of folklife, crafts, and cultural history, grow older and die without the opportunity (that might have been provided through a local public recreation program) to create an important oral history or written documentation of their traditions. These and many other less obvious but nonetheless important forms of recreation in rural areas become the victims of local government budget cuts.

A resurgence of interest in rural and small community life has occurred in recent years, and many changes in the rural character over the last 20 years have been recognized. While the 1980 Census results are not yet published, estimates suggest that about 500 rural counties continue to lose population, while many more—perhaps 1,500—are experiencing an influx of newcomers. Like the “back to the city movement,” this migration to many parts of rural America has created problems, among them loss of prime agricultural land, increased demands for urban-type services, and sometimes confrontations between rural newcomers and residents based on widely different values.

The energy shortage has special implication for rural areas as this shift of populations and land uses takes



Photo: Henry Horenstein. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Fishing at Fort Getty Recreation Park, Rhode Island.

place. In some areas, the search for new energy sources has created overnight boom towns, while at the same time presenting conflicts between demands for environmental and natural resource conservation and for exploitation and development. In areas economically dependent on tourism, the number of visitors has declined because of a higher travel cost, which in turn has lowered both private incomes and public revenues, and which in the end results in reduction or elimination of community services to the rural residents. Recreation and cultural programs are often the first to go when "higher priority" demands such as housing and education must be met.

Recreation Planning Concepts for Preserving Rural Areas

Because rural areas have always been viewed as a source of stability in American life, the changes that have occurred during the last two decades have been unsettling on the rural identity and character and on the lives of the rural residents. To understand the problems of rural areas and to further the President's National Small Community and Rural Development policy, the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS), cooperating with other agencies, is assessing major issues and trends in its recreation programs. HCRS recognizes that coordinated planning has become more necessary than ever. If this planning is to be successful, a number of basic concepts must be kept in mind.

1. Broadly, recreation can be employed to achieve a series of interrelated community objectives: economic development, protection of natural resources, revitalization of main streets in rural towns, preservation of community identity and character in both the physical and social sense, and beautification of the community. Federal, state, and local officials and the public will have to encompass a much broader view about the nature of recreation than they have in the past.
2. Recreational opportunities are not infrequently associated in a direct way with cultural and natural resources. Especially in rural areas, the relationship between the townscape (the built environment) and natural resources (streams, farmscapes, and forests) is very strong. Placing planning for both cultural resources and recreation within the context of the total physical environment will invariably be more productive than the piecemeal, project-oriented, and separatist approach that has prevailed. Careful and thorough inventories of both cultural and natural/recreational resources are essential before spending limited public funds.
3. Often when a group in a rural area organizes to accomplish one goal, the momentum they create can spin-off important benefits. For example, a small community in California organized initially to rehabilitate housing, but ultimately proceeded to establish a credit union, a community center and educational program, and a commercial tile operation that spread not only within the immediate agricultural area but also to a neighboring suburban community. It seems reasonable to hope that those involved in survey, research, and planning efforts can coordinate their objectives so that what might begin as a single-shot recreation project can in the end deal with a variety of natural and cultural preservation programs. This will require special attention to the one aspect of planning that costs nothing: imagination.



Photo: Carl Fleischhauer. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Horseback riding near Cumberland, Rhode Island.

4. Traditionally recreation planning has proceeded from a base centered on people and their needs and has resulted in programs and developed facilities. Recreation facilities usually have at least some flexibility in regard to where they can be placed. On the other hand, historic preservation and natural resource conservation programs typically begin with the resource itself—an important rural landscape, a historic building or district, an archeological site, or a battlefield. The effort then to protect and preserve the resource for public use or enjoyment becomes the program. Natural and cultural resources usually have to be taken where they are found and have very little, if any, flexibility to their location. These differences have combined to produce differences in outlook, approach, and methodology in recreation planning and cultural and resource conservation planning. Coordinated planning and decisionmaking should occur more often, especially in areas where these resources are located together.

Created at the national level, HCRS has provided new and challenging opportunities for the effective joint planning of recreational and cultural facilities in the federal government. The same cooperative spirit should be further developed at the state and local levels as well.

Planning for recreation, historic preservation, and conservation of natural and cultural resources in rural areas presents many potential benefits for rural residents and visitors. The chance to provide a better life for rural Americans is closer than ever if we grasp it with a sense of creativity, imagination, and goodwill.



Photo: Terry Eiler. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Friday night dance, Blackberry Ridge, Carroll County, Virginia.

Ellen Reiss is staff assistant to the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service's Division of Community and Human Resource Development and has been working on the Rural Areas and Small Communities Recreation Assessment. She previously served as the State Recreation and Resources Planner for the Vermont Agency of Environmental Conservation where she was responsible for development of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and special recreation and

natural resource studies. She has contributed to many publications on recreation and environmental topics and has been a frequent lecturer at New England colleges and conferences. Ms. Reiss was educated at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut, and Vermont's Marlboro College. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Green Mountain Club and the Lake Champlain Islands Trust and was formerly the Chairman of the Board of the Onion River Arts Council and Vermont Tomorrow.

Suggested reading

The staff of the HCRS Rural Areas and Small Community Recreation Assessment has developed a bibliography of studies describing many facets of rural life. Copies of this bibliography as well as information about HCRS's Rural Recreation Assessment can be obtained from the Project Director, Division of Community and Human Resources Development, Room 312, HCRS, 440 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20243.

Chapter 5.

Some Social and Economic Underpinnings of Rural Preservation

by Ann Satterthwaite

What is Rural Preservation? Some Basic Issues

More than saving buildings and landscapes must be included in rural preservation programs. If only buildings and landscapes are protected, then just the veneer of rural communities will be preserved. The activities and the people who have created and sustained these physical features must also be a part of rural preservation programs.

Experience in urban historic preservation has shown how it can protect the architectural and historic fabric of communities. Although urban preservation has protected valuable buildings from the wrecking ball, produced widespread interest in maintaining or recreating continuity and human scale in new development, generated additional tax revenues, and created tourist attractions, it has also sometimes spawned problems. Urban preservation experience tells us that it also has the potential in rural areas to transform native populations, cultures, economies, and social structures into totally new communities.

One of these problems is the "dislocation" problem by which the mixed populations of many neighborhoods have been homogenized into a new blend of moneyed newcomers and natives who can afford to remain. Often in this process many of the original inhabitants have been forced to leave their old homes and neighborhoods.

Dislocation is only the tip of the iceberg, however. The whole iceberg is made up of the mix of people, jobs, customs, institutions, services, and attitudes that create a place, make it work, and give it character. Attention to this mix and how it functions is imperative if rural preservation efforts are to avoid the problems of many earlier historic preservation programs.

The economic and social functions of a community or area are not only its underpinnings, but are also critical determinants of character and distinctiveness, and should be recognized as such by rural preservationists. They are important components of any rural preservation program. The physical distinctiveness of many places has been made by the people who lived and worked there. They have created buildings and groupings of buildings and towns and produced certain landscapes through different labors. Their needs, desires, and activities have left permanent imprints and physical patterns. Seen also in these rural areas is the impact of forces that lie beyond the bounds of the rural community itself: overriding national and international economic trends, changing technologies, and changing social values.

The challenge for rural preservation is to provide options for rural communities, so that the existing positive economic and social functions can be sustained to rein-

force and enhance the quality of life and the environments that have been built up over the centuries. If rural preservation does not offer options for support of the economic and social fabric of rural communities, then it ends up dealing primarily with saving buildings and protecting postcard views. Appearance becomes a goal in and of itself and the danger of displacement and decay increases.

Inclusion of the economic and social fabric as a major concern of rural preservation brings into the process some new partners: sociologists, economists, geographers, anthropologists, agronomists, and many others. The types of issues these new partners in the rural preservation process will face are discussed in general terms in the following pages. Some strategies and imperatives for dealing with them are outlined in the final section of this paper.



Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

Economic functions of a community are not only its underpinnings, but are also critical determinants of character and distinctiveness. The challenge for rural preservation is to provide options for rural communities so the existing positive economic functions can be sustained.

Although the notion of rural preservation raises a myriad of social and economic issues, several stand out as worthy of special attention. These are gentrification, employment, land speculation, and social structure.

Gentrification

The takeover of rural places and areas by middle- to upper-class urbanite outsiders has been called gentrification. It is often a gradual process, involving new people, new values, and a new way of life for the rural place. In the end, gentrification produces new communities.



Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

This out-dated one-room schoolhouse has become "Yankee Notions," a store in North Bennington, Vermont.

Ironically, sometimes the very features that attracted the outsiders are destroyed by the arrival of people in large numbers. Landscapes shaped by farming revert to trees, villages wither, and the natives leave or find other accommodations in the area as new arrivals buy old farms for second homes. Antique stores replace general stores, and real estate becomes a major economic activity. Southern Vermont is a good example of this.

Gentrification is not necessarily the product of high-handed, moneyed outsiders. Areas become ripe for gentrification as their economic and social fabric unravels. The local plant closes, farming becomes economically unproductive, children want to live in the city, and rural life seems to be at a dead end. The offer of good money for the rural homeplace may be welcomed by the native.

There is also the question of values. The types of buildings, their settings, the overall village ambience—those things that may be prime attractions to the outsiders may be taken for granted by the natives as an ordinary part of everyday life. Aspects of rural life that seem quaint and attractive to the outsider may also be the very things the native feels are out-of-date and not part of the new mainstream perceived on national television. In short, the natives may welcome those aspects of economic and social progress that are destructive of the quaintness sought by outsiders.

Rural preservation must therefore begin with an assessment of the economic and social systems and func-

tioning of the rural community. It must look closely at its strengths and weaknesses and come to conclusions about what supports to which systems might strengthen the overall function of rural areas. Failure to do this leads inevitably to further social and economic disintegration.

Employment

Work is a major determinant of the form and character of a place. A mill town, a plains farm area, a mining community, a fishing hamlet, a New England farm town, a small college town, and a tourist haven are very different places. The differences are largely determined by the type of economic activity, land uses, buildings, and settlement patterns. In small towns and rural areas the role of a single economic activity can be a dominating one, unlike the situation in large cities which have a mix of business and industries. The economic dominance of a single major industry clearly influences the physical character and appearance of a rural place—as well as supplying its critical economic sustenance. When a plant closes down, it is bad news anywhere, but especially in a small town in which the plant is the major source of employment.

Employment opportunities, like every other aspect of rural life, have been affected by forces beyond the control of the area itself. New technologies, changing

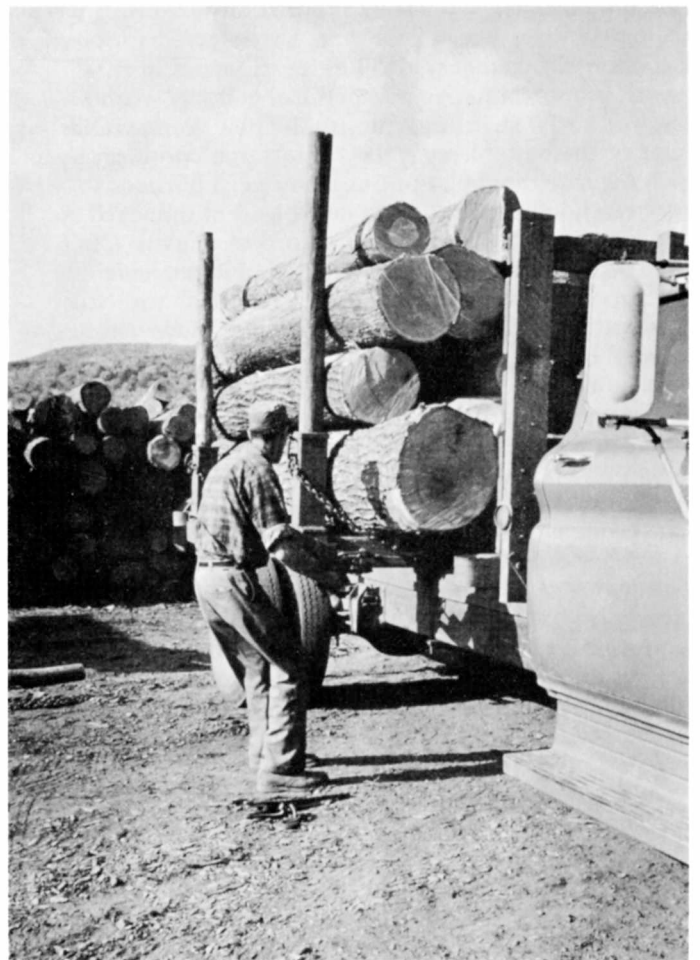


Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

Logging is an important economic industry throughout rural America.



Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

Farming still dominates some rural areas as at Palouse Plateau, near Prescott, Washington.

markets, demands for environmental protection, and international trade—whether in farming, industry, or commerce—have profound impacts on rural employment. Environmental protection regulations can close down small factories employing a large portion of people, as in the case of Vermont Natives Industries in Bridgewater, a worker-owned woolen mill. New regulations on the minimum amount of produce to be picked up, small increases in the cost of farm equipment, and rising interest rates, for example, can easily put a small farm out of business.

When jobs shrink or disappear in a small place, the options are limited. People can leave for greener pastures, commute to jobs elsewhere, or find new employment in the same place. All these alternatives have serious effects on the traditional way of life in a small place. Towns can be depleted of their young and middle-aged citizens who are especially important to its future. Or workers may be forced to commute long distances each day, returning only on weekends, as in the much-publicized case of the Appalachian workers who worked at auto industry jobs in Detroit during the week and returned to their hamlets on weekends. Others may shape their farms into more efficient businesses, turn to other trades, or find jobs in the service industries created by the arrival of urban commuters.

Economic activities affect not only the structure of rural towns, but also the rural landscape, for much of the countryside we seek to protect and preserve is shaped by farming. Preservationists often try to protect prevailing landscape features through the use of development rights transfers or conservation easements. But while conservation easements may indeed prevent development,



Photo: Carl Fleischhauer. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

The general store in a rural area is a focus of community life, as is Harper's store in Irwin County, Georgia.



Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

Churches like this one near Cather Ranch, Webster County, Nebraska, have always been an important part of rural life.

they do not necessarily ensure the continuation of desirable landscape appearance, since these are the result of specific farming activities and agricultural practices. If farming ceases, land reverts eventually to trees and forest—not an uncommon phenomenon in marginal farming areas. Likewise, changes in farming practices such as contour plowing, circular irrigation, the indoor grazing of cows, and new ways of producing orchard crops all produce highly visible changes in the landscape. The visual character of the rural landscape depends to a large extent on the nature and welfare of farming, and this in turn is a matter of economic vitality and resources.

Land Speculation

When hard times come to rural towns and areas and when farming becomes marginal, the real estate market opens to speculation. While land speculation is generally a by-product of other underlying economic and social problems, it is nonetheless a critical indicator of forthcoming change in rural areas. Speculation sets in motion spiraling price increases which often accelerate the departure of natives and in turn produce a new, higher-priced community. For some natives this is an economic bonanza

—if they are able to get on the bandwagon on time. Inevitably, however, a new and different community emerges.

Social Structure

While physical isolation of rural farms and towns can produce social isolation, this has been traditionally offset by a mix of institutions that offer a special sense of rural community. The church, school, post office, local store, and town meeting all provide opportunities for social interaction and communal activities. These are the places rural residents turn to for respite from work and living situations, to see friends, to receive necessary food, to pick up mail and information, and to be uplifted.

As the economies of scale become more and more a fact of life faced by both public and private institutions, many of the services and community institutions that support social life in rural areas are moved further and further away, usually into bigger, more “efficient” facilities. The village school is replaced by the consolidated regional school; the small, local county hospital is replaced by the regional hospital; and the bus service turns to inter- rather than intra-state service. In extreme cases, even the local post office may be closed down. Not only are these new service and community institutions more remote physically, requiring longer journeys to reach them, but local jobs are forfeited as well. The sense of community provided by the local facilities is gone.

Such changes in the scale of rural service institutions undermine the communal life of rural areas in subtle ways. Long school bus trips, the absence of local bus service, and a shift to supermarket shopping on the outskirts of a larger town all tend to force a new dependence on automobile travel, which in itself can be a form of physical isolation as well as provide a discomfiting encounter with new worlds outside the narrow and sheltered confines of a rural hamlet. The social fabric of rural life is literally being stretched apart.

Rural preservation must be concerned about the functioning of a community. Account therefore has to be taken of these changes to its social structure, and ways found to provide influences that can offset the inherent isolation of rural life and work. When the stores, post offices, schools, and busses are taken away from rural towns, the life and functioning of the towns is affected. Changes required by the economies of scale can have



Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

An abandoned schoolhouse north of Cowles, Nebraska, once served local rural residents.



Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

Mobile homes occupy lands once used for farming.

serious effects on the quality of rural life. The central question, of course, is whether the savings are worth the disruption.

Building and Housing Types

Building and housing types display wide variations, whether they are located in remote areas, a rural town, a crossroads settlement, or on an individual farm. They also show distinctive regional characteristics: the adobe in the Southwest, the Pennsylvania bank barn, the tin-roofed southern buildings, the Virginia courthouses, the Midwestern tree-shaded courthouse, and the cathedral of the Midwest—the grain elevator. Both the styles and uses of these buildings represent ways of life and particular histories of different regions, and vernacular architecture frequently holds the essence of an area.

Rural architecture is obviously an important aspect of rural preservation. Yet this interest in rural architecture must be balanced with an equal concern for the changing economic and social pressures and realities that confront rural areas and have direct effects on rural housing and buildings. For example, the large family farmhouse that once housed several generations is perhaps less necessary today with a younger generation working in town and in a time when farming has become more of a business than a family operation. The cost of heating, changing lifestyles, difficulties of renovation, and high interest rates for improvement loans may make the old farmstead seem obsolete. And so the mobile home appears in the front yard, or perhaps a brick rambler in a nearby field. Though jarring to one's sense of the integrity of the aggregate of the traditional farm complex, contemporary needs must be taken into account if the farm world is to continue to function effectively.

The matter of maintaining the architectural integrity of rural areas poses interesting problems for the rural preservationist. The percentage of home ownership is far higher in rural areas than in urban areas, and community control in housing, zoning, and planning may appear as a threat to individual rights. Another problem exists in how housing and other buildings can be upgraded in a timely way and within the owners' budgets.

Shoring Up the Underpinnings

Most of the issues described here are the result of broad movements and pressures that are far removed from the rural areas themselves and far from the specific interests of most traditional rural preservationists. However, in looking at how the rural preservationist can begin to deal effectively with some of these economic and social issues in a larger and more meaningful context, the following observations seem appropriate.

1. The real challenge is to make rural areas work in a socially compatible and economically productive way. It is not merely a matter of turning back the clock and forcing rural areas that worked well in the 1920s to function in the 1980s. Nor is it simply a matter of freezing picturesqueness. The most immediate and urgent challenge is to identify with as much precision as possible those factors and values that influence the life and functioning of rural towns and the countryside in a positive way. Implicitly, this may ultimately require new voices to be heard in decisionmaking and new kinds of protection to be developed. Account must be taken of the tendency of large institutions (be they government, whose red tape

and regulations may overwhelm the small farmer and businessman, or large businesses whose operations often tend to cut out the small farmer in favor of the larger operator) to call all the shots.

In the face of such massive forces, the isolated farmer and small-town citizen have suffered from an inability to organize an effective response or to create much national awareness of their special situations and needs. They have traditionally lacked confidence and identity and have been largely unable to exercise the kind of group power and political or economic muscle that urban interest groups have learned to demonstrate. Rural voices are gradually being strengthened, however, and their concerns are being expressed. This new and timely rural consciousness will help rural preservationists cope with the social and economic underpinnings of rural communities as well as build a wider national consciousness of the importance of rural places and regions.



Photo: Sheafe Satterthwaite.

A bumpersticker displays the pride of native Vermonters.

2. Just as concern for the architectural quality of individual buildings evolved over time into a concern for the tout ensemble and for the economic and social aspects of neighborhood conservation in cities, so must concern for architecture and historic quality in rural areas become an essential part of a larger concern for the total rural community and its environment. It must also be emphasized that just as architectural quality is different in Charleston, South Carolina, than it is in Howell, Michigan, so the concerns of rural preservationists must begin to encompass appreciation for vernacular forms of architecture and the social and financial well-being of rural families.

3. It is especially important for the private sector and all levels of government to recognize the distinctive needs of rural areas and to come to decisions and policies about how those needs may most effectively be met. A critical concern is that presented by the necessity to take advantage of the economies of scale in providing services and facilities in rural areas. Is there no way that smaller-scaled services—such as smaller schools, transportation systems, post offices—can be made to work in the hinterlands of America? Cities like New York have found that decentralizing some government offices and functions, such as the mayor's office, works well. Why not in rural areas? Likewise, all sorts of administrative regulations such as Social Security, inheritance taxes on family farms, ICC freight rates, overlapping housing reg-

ulations from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Farmers Home Administration, and state regulations on produce pickups need reexamination with an eye to providing more decentralized and convenient operations. At the same time there is the need for more participation in rural and regional decision-making, with a view toward better service and better use of community resources.

Small rural businesses need special attention. They suffer from red tape, excessive regulations and environmental controls, financing problems, and the lack of access to expertise in operating them efficiently. EDA, SBA, the Department of Agriculture, and various regional commissions could learn much from the success of the English Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas, which provides specific kinds of technical help to small operations of not more than 20 skilled employees. In this country, which has special problems arising out of the high cost of equipment, labor, and financial and specialist assistance, new efforts at encouraging self-help ventures and cooperatives should be made.

4. Private groups will no doubt take the lead in rural preservation as they have in urban preservation. Private

sector leadership will be critical in determining the direction of rural preservation. The early and active involvement of private rural organizations like Ruritan, the Grange, and county agents will introduce some solid rural points of view as well as bring into better balance the historical tendency toward elitism and aesthetic appreciation in rural preservation. Other private groups offer expertise that could be helpful as well. The political tactics of the snowmobile organizations, for example, might be useful to other rural preservation problems. The work of such private preservation groups as the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation in maintaining a degree of population diversity in urban neighborhoods may also be useful. The work of the Nature Conservancy as an effective middleman in land conservation programs may be translated to other areas of rural life, in addition to suggesting new approaches to dealing with the problem of land speculation.

In summary, a constructive attempt to understand the economic and social underpinnings of rural areas is essential if rural preservation is to amount to more than a saving of rural stage sets that have no relevance to the conditions and needs of contemporary life in rural America.

Ann Satterthwaite, AICP, is a planner, who has specialized in historic preservation, land and cultural conservation, recreation, and environmental planning. She has worked for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Conservation Foundation, the Department of the Interior, and the National Endowment for the Arts as well as for preservation organizations in Charleston, South Carolina; Denver, Colorado; Green Springs, Virginia; and Montgomery County, Maryland. She has lectured extensively and contributed to many professional journals and books.

Chapter 6.

Folklife and Cultural Preservation

by Alan Jabbour and Howard W. Marshall

What is Folklife?

How we respond to Crevecoeur's old question, "What is an American?" depends on how we view what American life hinges on. Folklorists who record and study the cultural life of the United States are drawn to features of *tradition* in the lives of Americans—those longstanding ways of expression that give meaning to ordinary life and work. Today folklorists are encountering historic preservationists with whom they share research and preservation goals. As the two fields become aware of their common goals and examine more closely their respective methods and points of view, there may be opportunities in the future for serious and fruitful collaboration.

There is of course nothing new about recording and reflecting on tradition. It spans the written record of human history from the Hammurabi Code to geographer Fred Kniffen's contemporary analyses of rural houses. But only in recent generations has a special professional field developed for the study of folk culture. Today four American universities offer doctoral degrees in folklore and folklife, and many other universities offer special courses in the subject. In this academic setting the old definition of folklore as verbal arts and folklife as material culture is falling away before a new and concerted effort to deal with the totality of man's traditional expressive culture, both verbal and nonverbal. This holistic approach to tradition draws on work in other established disciplines such as cultural history, historical archeology, cultural geography, comparative religion, literature, ethnomusicology, and art history.

Folklife is as much an attitude as a tight academic discipline, and the study of folklore and folklife has drawn researchers in many formal disciplines since the 19th century. Contemporary usage of the word folklife comes from a subtle and complicated grafting of two strong branches of the study of man—folklore in the British and American sense (focusing on verbal and behavioral traditions) and folklife in the European sense (focusing on man's customary built world of art and artifacts). Both schools developed in Europe and have converged in the United States in what is often called simply folklife. In this sense folklife embraces all forms of traditional cultural expression—verbal, artifactual, and behavioral—and all social and economic classes. All of us, whether we realize it or not, participate in folklife as we maintain our regional, ethnic, occupational, family, or personal repertoire of expressive words and deeds.

The legislation that created the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in 1976 was entitled the American Folklife Preservation Act, and it has

helped codify and diffuse the term folklife. The definition in the act is at once modern and conservative, and its wording has already appeared in legislation in at least three states.

The term "American folklife" means the traditional expressive culture shared within the various groups in the United States: familial, ethnic, occupational, religious, regional; expressive culture includes a wide range of creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, technical skill, language, literature, art, architecture, music, play, dance, drama, ritual, pageantry, handicraft; these expressions are mainly learned orally, by imitation, or in performance, and are generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction. (PL 94-201)

Folklife and the Preservation Movement

Folklife and historic preservation, as professions and movements, share a number of cherished values and ingrained inclinations. Both possess a fundamental reverence for and belief in the beauty and significance of the expressive forms of human culture. A song, a story, a dance, or a house are looked at not simply as illustrations but as quintessential expressions of the varieties of human life and culture. Art is significant to both fields, and life itself tends to be viewed as artful. Fieldwork is important for both, providing practitioners not only with essential data but also with inspiration and ideas.

Finally, both fields have always been impelled by a desire to *preserve*—whether through documentation or direct action, whether because of sentiment, scholarly devotion, antiquarian inclination, or social commitment.

But if folklife and historic preservation share many goals and concerns, their orbits have nevertheless remained essentially separate until recently. The reasons they now seem to be converging are worth examining.

The broadening of the historic preservation movement into the sphere of folklife may be looked at in terms of three key factors. First, a strong democratic undercurrent in historic preservation has directed the attention of the movement more and more to the dwellings and structures of everyday life. Fine homes and grand public buildings have not been forgotten, but they increasingly share the limelight of history with the "ordinary" buildings of everyday life. This broadening of the preservation movement's social perspective has unquestionably been helped along by public preservation programs at the local, state, and federal levels.

Second, the historic preservation movement has shown a growing tendency to link past to present in its mission and world view. Not only is there more interest in recent

periods of the past, but the celebration of historic structures is being used as a springboard for present actions and future planning. Phrases such as “adaptive reuse” clearly show an impulse on the part of preservationists to link what is historic to the contemporary world. Students of folklore and folklife, on the other hand, have always connected past to present. For them the essence of the cultural process is *tradition*—that blend of continuity and change through which human creativity invests the past in the present.

Third, the historic preservation movement has gradually broadened from a preoccupation with tangible artifacts to attention to the whole range of cultural expression, tangible and intangible. The same way of life that created buildings also created songs, dances, recipes, religions, philosophies, medical practices, and a host of other forms of expression which, though lacking in artifacts, are clearly not lacking in significance. These aspects of culture are not only useful in providing a fuller understanding of buildings, but also deserve attention for their own sake.

The study of folklife has long included these three ingredients—a concern for the everyday, regional, or marginal end of the social spectrum; a mode of thinking that links past and present through a concept of tradition; and a special proficiency in intangible aspects of culture such as verbal arts, music, and medical practices. On the other hand, folklorists did not pay enough attention to material culture until recent years. Though in theory a story, a song, a pot, and a fence were seen as coequal creative expressions of human culture, as a practical matter the tangible aspects of culture were too often neglected. That the study of folklife has included more attention to material culture in the past two decades owes much to interdisciplinary contacts with archeology,

anthropology, art history, and cultural geography, as well as to continued contact with European folklife study. As folklorists have come to have more regard for material culture, there has been a corresponding rise in their encounters with historic preservationists.

Finally, we note a broadening of perspective that has taken place simultaneously in both fields. Historic preservation and folklife both began as disciplines or movements devoted to items, texts, and artifacts. Whatever attention they may have paid to the larger pattern and flow of culture was subsidiary to their focus on those prize songs, stories, and houses. But in recent years both disciplines have worked harder at understanding the larger cultural context within which those texts and artifacts flourish. The effort to understand the cultural context has both enriched each field and made it easier for the two fields to converge. When the target for understanding and for preservation is the landscape or the community, making common cause is somehow more natural and comfortable than when the target was simply a building or a story.

A Sampler of Issues and Perspectives

As preservationists and folklorists begin exploring aspects of folk culture together, their inquiries yield interesting perspectives regarding what are commonly (and vaguely) called cultural resources. The team field projects organized by the American Folklife Center in the last 3 years have provided glimpses at some of these perspectives. The following examples are offered not as new issues—thoughtful preservationists have doubtless pondered similar examples—but as illustrations of the sorts of perspectives that naturally flow from professional attention to folk culture in a preservation context.



Photo: Howard W. Marshall. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.
High Hill Baptist Church in Turner County, Georgia.

In the summer of 1977, at the invitation of a coalition of local cultural organizations, the center organized a field project in an eight-county area of south-central Georgia. Using field notes, still photographs, and sound recordings as their principal media for documentation, the team talked with local people, attended church services and gospel sings, recorded old and new stories, observed farming practices and fishing expeditions, and photographed quilts and pit barbecues. All this life, work, and cultural expression is intimately bound up with the land and landscape of a region that we called "Wiregrass Georgia." Thus, the fieldworkers paid considerable attention to folk architecture and to farm and community layouts—in short, to the very features of the cultural landscape that would also engage cultural geographers, architectural historians, and historic preservationists with an interest in grassroots culture.

Many preservationists are now attentive to folk architecture, so it is not necessary to dwell upon the techniques of documentation used by the team of folklorists nor upon the analyses and conclusions about the region's folk architectural forms. Similarly, researchers from other fields share the interest of our field team in the layouts of farms and rural communities. But to the folklorists these tangible elements are arrayed in mosaic with intangible elements such as prayer meetings, musical jam sessions, local legends, and food preservation techniques. They are all cultural resources, and viewed together they suggest what might be called the region's personality.

One building that captured the attention of our team would also have intrigued a team of historic preservationists. The Royal Tabernacle, an imposing open-air pavilion near Mystic (Irwin County), is the site of a longstanding annual gospel singing convention. It is sufficiently striking as a structure to be singled out for regional and architectural significance, but the team of folklorists was also interested in documenting the annual event the tabernacle housed and in exploring the symbolic significance of the site, structure, and event to the people of the region. The team attended the annual sing and spent the day participating in, documenting, and contemplating the event. As it turned out, the sponsors were seriously considering discontinuing the event for a variety of reasons, and the historic chain of annual gatherings has subsequently been interrupted. If our goal were simply documentation, we were none too soon. If preservation of the building is the goal, the architectural and photographic documentation represents a good start, and discussions are underway with local and state advocates about possible preservation steps. But if the total cultural resource includes the event as well as the structure, our preservation mission becomes more delicate, complicated, and challenging. Whatever else may be done in the future, it can be reported that the very act of formally documenting the annual sing has stimulated considerable interest and concern among citizens of the region about finding ways to keep it going.

Another team project organized by the center focused on the region on either side of the Blue Ridge around the Virginia/North Carolina border. The project, undertaken in cooperation with the National Park Service, examined the cultural traditions of the region in the context of the planning and programming of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The parkway in this area offers both natural and cultural landscapes to its travelers, and parkway



Photo: Carl Fleischhauer. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

The Clements family home in Turner County, Georgia.

interpretive sites such as Mabry Mill have long highlighted the cultural history of the region.

Our team was similar in its professional makeup to the Georgia team, though the Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project also included professional documentary photographers. Again the team addressed a broad range of cultural expression, tangible and intangible, documenting with field notes, still photographs, sound recordings, and sometimes videotapes. Again the goal was to gain a sense of the larger pattern of cultural resources within the region today, giving special attention to traditions that invest the present with historical depth and significance.

A scenic overlook along the parkway provided our team with a convenient opportunity for reflections on past and present. Fox Hunters Paradise, the parkway brochure explains, offers a "10-minute trail to Paradise, where old-time hunters listened to the baying of their hounds in the valley below." The tone of the text associates fox hunting with the misty pioneer past of the area, and no doubt many tourists are unaware how vigorously fox hunting is pursued along the Blue Ridge



Photo: David Stanley. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

A gospel quartet at the annual singing convention held in the Royal Tabernacle in Mystic, Georgia.

today. Our team members interviewed fox hunters and documented neighborhood hunts and one regional hunt in Carroll County, Virginia, that drew men and their hounds from all over the upper South.

Fox hunting along this stretch of the Blue Ridge is akin to, yet distinct from, the sort of fox hunting associated with horses, formal riding attire, and grand estates in Virginia. Here the horse is replaced by the pickup truck, and people dress in normal local garb. But the basic cultural values are much the same, involving the domestic pleasures of raising the fox hounds, the social pleasures of leisure and conversation during the hunt, the aural pleasure of listening to the baying hounds, and the philosophical pleasure of contemplating the eternal pursuit of the eternally elusive fox.

Our interviews with fox hunters dwelt not only on the history of the custom—"Older than Christianity!" one devotee told us—but also on its present practice and attendant problems. Many of them were agitated about the rising value of fox furs and the consequent growth of trapping activities that threaten the fox population. Fox hunters rarely catch a fox, and they let it go when they do. The fervor of their solicitude, which includes letters to state legislators on behalf of preserving the fox and its habitat, made us wonder whether differences of



Photo: Lyntha Scott Eiler. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Fieldworkers Richard McCamant and Thomas Adler talk to Ernest Jarvis as they document the history and layout of the Jarvis farm near Ennice, North Carolina. This work was part of a joint folklife project conducted in 1978 by the American Folklife Center and the National Park Service.



Photo: Terry Eiler. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Before the field trial at the Twin County Foxhunters Club, Carroll County, Virginia.



Photo: Carl Fleischhauer. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.
The Mill Ranch and the Santa Rosa Mountains, Paradise Valley, Nevada.

upbringing and cultural background would forever prevent urbane conservationists from making common cause with these, their grassroots counterparts.

Our third example is a team research project carried out over 2 years in the northern Nevada ranching community of Paradise Valley. Unlike the Georgia and Blue Ridge projects, the Paradise Valley Folklife Project was selected and undertaken without any connections or collaboration with local, state, or national organizations. Professional staff from the Smithsonian Institution participated in the project, however, and the research ultimately led to an exhibit at the Smithsonian's National Museum of History and Technology. Unlike the other projects, the Paradise Valley research involved visits during various seasons of the year, making possible a more thorough documentation of the community's seasonal round of life, work, and celebration. The fieldworkers in this project included not only folklorists but specialists in other disciplines, notably ethnomusicology, anthropology, and archeology. Motion-picture film was added to the documentary media of the earlier projects. Especially considering the small valley population of

about 250, the Paradise Valley study has emerged as the most intensive field research yet undertaken by the center, and it seems to have set a number of precedents in the study of American folklife.

Though small, Paradise Valley is culturally complex. Its ethnic composition includes Paiute, Anglo-American, German, Italian, and Basque families, and the interweaving of these cultural strands makes both the history and the present-day cultural life of the valley richly varied. In the occupational sphere, ranching—family and corporate—is dominant; but farming, which became obsolete early in this century, is again on the rise. Mining and sheepherding live on in the memory of the community, though they are not a significant part of the current economy. Our project documented a broad gamut of the traditional life of the valley, from the activities of buckaroos in line-camps, to the stories of Basques in the valley, to the techniques of Italian ranchers. The project's archeological component amplified the story of the now vanished Chinese community in the valley.

One of the many important stories to emerge from the study is that of the valley's Italian families. They first

came to Paradise Valley in the 1860s, and they are very much present today. Their imprint is dramatically visible on the landscape of the valley, for among their number were some northern Italian stonemasons who turned their artistry to the needs of the frontier community. Their granite and sandstone buildings stand as a testimony to their contribution and to the valley's living Italian-American tradition. Two of the most striking and monumental stone buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places; the humbler examples, though imbued with the same artistry, would remain unsung but for our documentary efforts. Already a broad understanding of the intangible as well as tangible cultural life of Paradise Valley has helped us assess the full significance of the stone architecture. But to a folklorist there are other preservation issues. Having preserved and celebrated the buildings as tangible artifacts, should we not also consider preserving and encouraging the art itself? A venerable tradition of craftsmanship, in both Italy and America, made possible the flowering of these buildings in a northern Nevada valley. That tradition, though dormant, lives on in the minds, tools, and talents of living Italian-American artisans today. Preservation of the cultural resources of Paradise Valley and that region of the West should surely include exploring ways to preserve that artisanry and to encourage it to flower again.

A Prospectus

It is hard to anticipate all the particulars of a shared future for folklife and historic preservation; yet certain points deserve mention.

1. Both folklorists and historic preservationists think of their subject matter as cultural resources. Yet their activities overlap only partially, and most practitioners in the two fields are unaware of even that partial overlap. Further, other networks of cultural specialists in America also label their subject matter cultural resources. Clearly, like the blind men describing the elephant, we owe it to ourselves to assess and define more carefully the total spectrum of cultural resources in the United States.
2. In particular, the concept of intangible cultural resources, as used within the context of historic preservation efforts, deserves more detailed analysis and assessment. Folklife will of course be deeply involved in refining the concept of what intangible resources are and what to do about their preservation. Yet folklife embraces tangible as well as intangible resources; and on the other hand, not all intangible elements of culture are folk cultural elements. Calls for a study of intangible resources that have appeared in preservation and conservation bills recently introduced in the Congress suggest



Photo: Carl Fleischhauer. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

This two-story granite bunkhouse on the Recanzone family ranch in Paradise Valley, Nevada, was built by alpine Italians who settled in the region around the turn of the century.

that this need may soon be addressed in a more formal way.

3. There may be some major differences between folk-life and preservation circles in the ways they approach their subjects. For example, some folklorists are uneasy about the hierarchic implications of the term "significance" as used by preservationists, fearing that it tends to reward uniqueness over representativeness. More serious interchanges between the two fields that explore these apparent differences in approach would certainly be helpful.

4. Both folklife and historic preservation circles are expressing a need to make their cultural documentation broader, more systematic, more retrievable, and more interchangeable. This is certainly an area where both fields could profit from working together.

5. In general, both fields would profit greatly from more serious and sustained conversation and interchange with each other. It would be appropriate for federal agencies and national organizations to take the lead in fostering greater communication.

6. Beyond conversations, there is no better way to get acquainted than to work together. Interdisciplinary field projects undertaken on an experimental basis, where preservationists and folklorists could conceive and execute side by side a plan for documentation and assessment of the cultural resources of a community or region, could have an electric effect on both fields and could lead to more effective approaches to deal with cultural resources in their totality.

7. Finally, as we struggle toward broader perspectives on culture, we must not neglect the intimate relationship between cultural resources and natural resources, nor spurn any opportunities to harmonize and integrate our thoughts and actions dealing with the two categories. Those Italian stonemasons in Paradise Valley helped shape that landscape by the infusion of their cultural tradition. At the same time, the natural resources of the valley may have helped attract their particular cultural skills, and the valley environment certainly began reshaping their cultural traditions from the moment of their arrival.

With such challenges our task may seem formidable. What is heartening is that the impulse to work together more is being heard on every side.

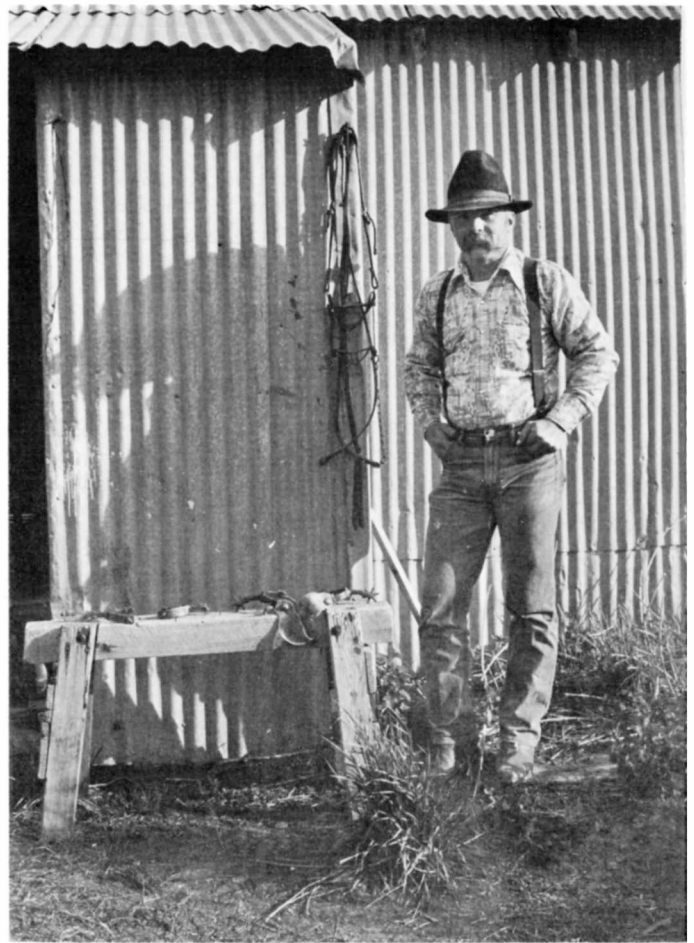


Photo: Howard W. Marshall. Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Dave Hiller poses at the Circle A line camp in the Owyhee Desert in Nevada with some of the horse gear he has made. This structure houses the ranch's buckaroos as their cattle graze in the vicinity.

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Part 2.
Techniques and Tools for the
Preservation of Rural
Resources

Part 2 of this work moves from a presentation of issues to a discussion of how things get done, or implementing preservation programs in rural areas. It includes practical information on preservation approaches that have been used successfully, and presents a range of techniques presently available to preserve historic, natural, and recreational resources. The funding programs of a number of federal agencies are summarized, as are the roles of private nonprofit organizations and state and local governments. In a concluding chapter, activities of the English Countryside Commission, which might be adapted for use in America, are also described.

Chapter 7, "Rural Historic Resources and the National Register," by architectural historian Bruce MacDougall, reviews procedures for listing properties in the National Register of Historic Places and highlights the benefits of such listing in terms of eligibility for grants, environmental review procedures, and tax concessions, and spells out how the National Register may be used to best advantage in conjunction with local protective programs. Of special interest in the context of this book is his discussion of the techniques for surveying and listing properties in rural areas and the special advantages of using National Register multiple resource and thematic nomination procedures.

Chapters 8 and 9 deal with federal funding programs of special application for cultural, natural, and recreation programs. These chapters will be of interest not only as ready references to existing programs that can be applied in rural areas, but also because they include brief examples from around the country describing how they have been successfully used. Chapter 8, covering federal programs to preserve historic properties has been prepared by Marilyn P. Cable, a planner with the Division of State Plans and Grants, HCRS, and Ken Pribanic and Barbara Hightower Fallin, former members of the Division. Chapter 9 describes federal programs relevant to the protection of natural resources and recreation program development in rural areas; it has been prepared by Barry S. Tindall, who is director of public affairs for the National Recreation and Park Association. Both chapters have been arranged to maximize their usefulness to readers seeking quick access to existing programs of federal assistance.

Dallas D. Miner has provided in chapter 10 a most useful description and summary of the role of state and local governments in preserving the rural landscape, including such traditional methods as land acquisition, capital improvements, taxation, and zoning. However, he also presents a description and evaluation of several newer techniques, such as agricultural districting and the

acquisition and transfer of development rights as workable approaches to open-space protection and farmland retention programs. It is clear that state and local governments have an extremely important role to play in rural preservation programs, and Mr. Miner's chapter will be of special interest to those who have need of a carefully structured layman's summary of the most useful legal tools that have been used to date.

"Vermont Act 250 as a Tool for Rural Preservation," presented by Professor Chester H. Liebs in chapter 11, has a special place in a book of this kind, since Vermont is one of a small but growing number of states that have undertaken to reassert state jurisdiction over the planning and development of rural areas in the absence of local willingness or capability to do so. Vermont Act 250 is widely known already as an innovative approach to land-use control that, with variations, will undoubtedly find application in other states. Professor Liebs discusses the events leading up to the passage of the act, its substantive requirements and procedures, and its application in a number of situations, which are not only representative of similar problems all over the country, but which also represent noteworthy victories for conservation interests.

Up to this point in the book, emphasis has been directed to the governmental aspects of rural conservation and preservation techniques. Chapter 12, "Private Rural Conservation Efforts," prepared by the staff of the Mid-Atlantic Field Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, elaborates on the programs of many national, state, and local private-sector organizations that play important parts in rural preservation through education, citizen participation, lobbying, and property acquisition. An outgrowth of the special Rural Areas Project of the National Trust, the case studies presented in this chapter focus on the programs of local and regional organizations whose concerns simultaneously include a number of cultural and natural conservation interests. Many more case studies from across the nation could be presented, of course, but these stand as a good sampling of the success stories that can emerge when local leadership, vision, and determination can be mustered in the private sector.

Chapter 14, the last in the book, has been specially commissioned for it to bring to an American audience the story of the British Countryside Commission, created in 1947 by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. R.J.S. Hookway, the author, has been director of the commission for many years and is widely regarded as one of the leading figures in the Western world on rural planning and conservation subjects. The 53

success of the rural planning movement in Great Britain is only in part a matter of law; much if not all that has been accomplished in rural conservation in that nation could be repeated in many parts of the United States with only minor additions and modifications of existing law. Progress in programs of conservation and recreation in rural areas is dependent, as Mr. Hookway points out, on a citizenry that cares deeply about its country-

side, adequate systems of planning control for the long range, a series of arrangements between government and private landowners tailored to specific actions, and the presence locally of officials with certain skills who can "get things done" quickly and on a small scale. It is a story that American preservationists who care about rural areas will wish to ponder at length.

Chapter 7.

Rural Historic Resources and the National Register

by Bruce MacDougal

The National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) of the Department of the Interior, is an essential tool for use in preserving rural resources. To date, about 24,000 properties have been listed, including a wide range of districts, buildings, structures, sites, and objects related to rural America.

It is difficult to make a meaningful judgment about rural cultural resources significant in America's history, culture, and prehistory because of the problem in defining just what constitutes a rural, historic property. Cities in the 19th century considered comparatively large seem mere towns or villages when compared to today's metropolitan areas. An 18th-century farmhouse that once commanded 300 acres may now be incorporated into a city and surrounded by suburban tract housing, having become an "urban" property for all practical purposes.

Notwithstanding the absence of a precise definition of rural historic property, many of those listed in the National Register evoke a sense of their rural past. Examples include:

- *Buildings*—farmhouses, plantation houses, ranches, pueblos, lighthouse keepers' quarters, and even Civilian Conservation Corps camps;
- *Districts*—New England villages, Rocky Mountain mining towns, Mid-Atlantic Victorian seaside resorts, Southern crossroads communities, and Midwest main streets; (Rural landscapes are of course integral parts of districts comprised of farmsteads.)
- *Structures*—wooden covered bridges, metal truss bridges, grain elevators, canals, and hydroelectric dams;
- *Objects*—trains, boats, and totem poles;
- *Sites*—early white settlement sites in Maine; Spanish settlement sites in Texas; native American Indian mounds in Georgia; and aboriginal fishing sites in Alaska.

How a Property is Listed

Most nominations to the National Register come from one of two sources: the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in each state or federal agencies. One of the major responsibilities of the SHPO is to nominate those properties that meet the National Register's Criteria for Evaluation as published in the January 9, 1976, *Federal Register*. Individuals, organizations, communities, or SHPO staff may prepare nominations depending upon the states' procedures; however, in every case, nominations must be approved by a state appointed review board. Both the SHPO staff and the state review board must meet professional qualifica-

tions established by HCRS. A federal agency may prepare nominations for properties on land it owns or has jurisdiction over, provided the SHPO is given an opportunity to comment on its eligibility.

A problem often encountered is that while the decision to list or not to list is based on evaluations by professional historians, architectural historians, or archeologists, the significance of the property being considered may not be widely recognized by the community. Often the simple act of listing in the National Register gives credibility to efforts to preserve a property. For example, the Plummer-Jones Farm in Stafford County, New Hamp-



Photo: J.F. Brooks, National Architectural and Engineering Record. Courtesy of the National Register.

The 1853 Sand Key Lighthouse in Monroe County, Florida, represents the kind of maritime related rural resource that meets National Register criteria. It is the second oldest of six iron screw pile lighthouses erected to aid navigation along the coast. The keeper's quarters on the second level are connected to the watchroom at the observation platform by an enclosed circular stair.

shire, was perceived by the community as just another connected group of farm structures, quite typical of New Hampshire's rural architecture. All but the earliest section of the complex was to be demolished according to the provisions of the owner's will, which left the land to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Preservationists attempted to break the will hoping that nominating the property to the National Register would emphasize to the courts the significance of the total farm as it evolved from a small, single 18th-century 1½-story house to a larger complex including a tavern, two barns, several later wings, and a shop. A member of the state historical society researched the property in consultation with the SHPO staff and submitted the findings to the SHPO. After it was approved by the state review board and signed by the SHPO, it was forwarded to HCRS in Washington, reviewed, and ultimately listed. The ending was a happy one: the court was convinced, the will was set aside, and the Plummer-Jones Farm was saved as one of the best examples of connected farm buildings in New Hampshire. National Register designation was instrumental in providing definitive evaluation of the historic importance of the property.



Photo: James L. Garvin, New Hampshire Historical Society. Courtesy of the National Register.

All but the one-story section between the barn and the two-story residential section of the Plummer-Jones Farm in Milton, Strafford County, New Hampshire, was to be demolished as a provision of the will of a past owner. National Register listing was instrumental in helping the courts recognize the significance of not just the earliest section, but of the entire connected farm architecture.

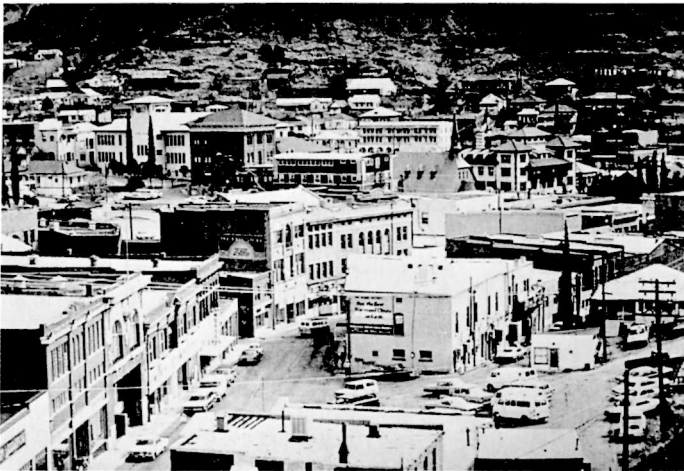


Photo: Courtesy of the National Register.

The Bisbee Historic District in Cochise County, Arizona, is nestled in a narrow canyon in the Mule Mountains in the southeastern part of the state. The structures largely date from approximately 1890 to 1915, during the period when Bisbee was the center of a booming copper mining district.

Sometimes a property may be evaluated for its National Register eligibility without ever being formally listed. This happens when a potentially eligible property might be affected by a federal project such as highway construction, water impoundment, or some other federal action that might directly or indirectly disturb the integrity of the property. If it is already listed in the National Register or has been determined eligible for listing, the federal agency then has a responsibility during its project-planning stages to take the cultural importance of the property into account. The procedure for accomplishing this is monitored by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency which reviews such federal projects to assure that historic preservation values are considered in the planning stages of federally assisted projects.



Photo: Ric Borjes. Courtesy of the National Register.

Lake Yellowstone Hotel, the oldest existing hotel in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, was the first opened to the public in 1891. Greatly enlarged in 1903-1904, and again in 1923, it reflects the rapid growth of tourism in the United States after 1900. The National Park Service purchased the building in 1979, with plans to upgrade the facility. It was determined eligible for listing in the National Register in 1980.

Benefits of Listing

Listing in the National Register qualifies properties for grants from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), which is administered by HCRS and apportioned to the states for redistribution on a matching basis to worthy projects.

These funds are made available through the SHPO for a variety of projects that either result in or contribute to the preservation of National Register properties. For example, HPF monies have been used to repair a covered bridge, to acquire and develop a 19th-century gold mine as a tourist attraction, and to adaptively re-use a 19th-century mill in a small rural town as a shopping and office complex. Because HPF money is limited, states have not been able to use it for much more than leveraging private and other nonfederal funds for worthy projects. In actual practice, funds from HCRS often constitute only a small share of the total cost of a project.

Federal funds are also made available, through the states, to identify and nominate rural historic properties and to prepare plans to preserve them. Numerous rural surveys have been funded by this method. For example, in the Finger Lakes region of New York, a survey of the village of Penn Yan, Yates County, was undertaken in 1978 under the auspices of the New York SHPO. In a second phase undertaken in 1979, the scope and detail of the survey effort was broadened to include the entire county, a large agricultural area surrounding Penn Yan. Through these surveys an increased awareness of the area's resources, as well as the potential for preserving those resources, has been gained.

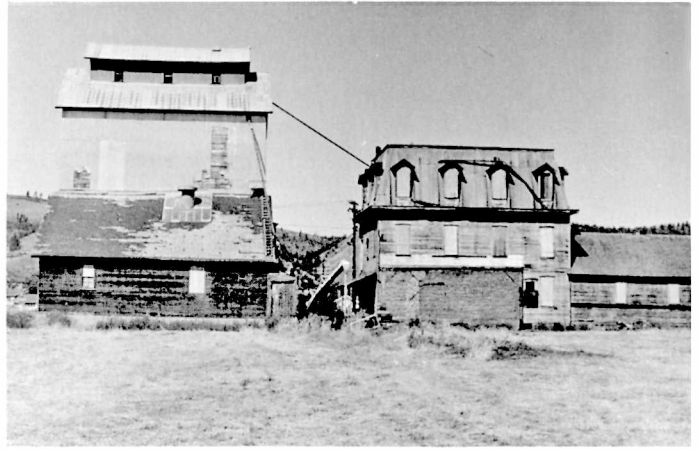


Photo: Marilyn Hoopes. Courtesy of the National Register.

The Union County Flouring Mill in Union County, Oregon, is both a visually and historically prominent landmark in LaGrande and the Grande Ronde River valley. Flour mills were economically essential in the area's pioneer agrarian communities. Built by the local farmers alliance, with the support of the LaGrande Chamber of Commerce in 1892, it consists of an unusually "high-style" mill and an adjacent utilitarian elevator.



Photo: Jake Thomas. Courtesy of the National Register.

Fishing, farming, and logging continue to sustain the economy of Skamakawa, Washington, while maintaining its 19th-century vernacular character and its dependence on the Columbia River. The village is listed as a historic district in the National Register.

The grants mentioned earlier are a direct subsidy for historic buildings listed in the National Register. Another, indirect subsidy is available for these properties through the Tax Reform Act of 1976. It allows a reduction of a developer's federal income tax liability if a qualified income-producing property is rehabilitated according to certain standards established by the Secretary of the Interior. To qualify, properties may be individually listed on the National Register, certified as a contributing element within a National Register historic district, or certified as a contributing element of a state or locally established historic district. In the latter case the state or local ordinance must be certified, and the district itself must also be approved as having substantially met National Register requirements for listing. Most of the noteworthy properties that have qualified for these tax benefits since the program was initiated in 1976 are in urban areas. However, there have been a number of projects where mills located in less densely populated areas and other kinds of small town properties have been rehabilitated through tax provisions. The buildings

within a farm complex, if depreciable, could also qualify. Overall, however, the usefulness of these incentives varies, depending on the property and on the tax situation of the owner.

Another federal law that helps protect rural National Register properties is the Surface Mining and Control Act of 1977. Under this law, a property containing coal resources and listed in the National Register is less likely to be subject to surface mining. The particular consequences of the law in regard to historic preservation vary from state to state, depending on state and federal regulations.

National Register Used with Local Protective Devices

The listing of rural properties in the National Register can be helpful because listing triggers federal protection, funding, and tax benefits. Generally, however, the deciding factor in preserving historic properties is local interest backed by local involvement and leadership. Many rural localities protect their historic areas by ordinances

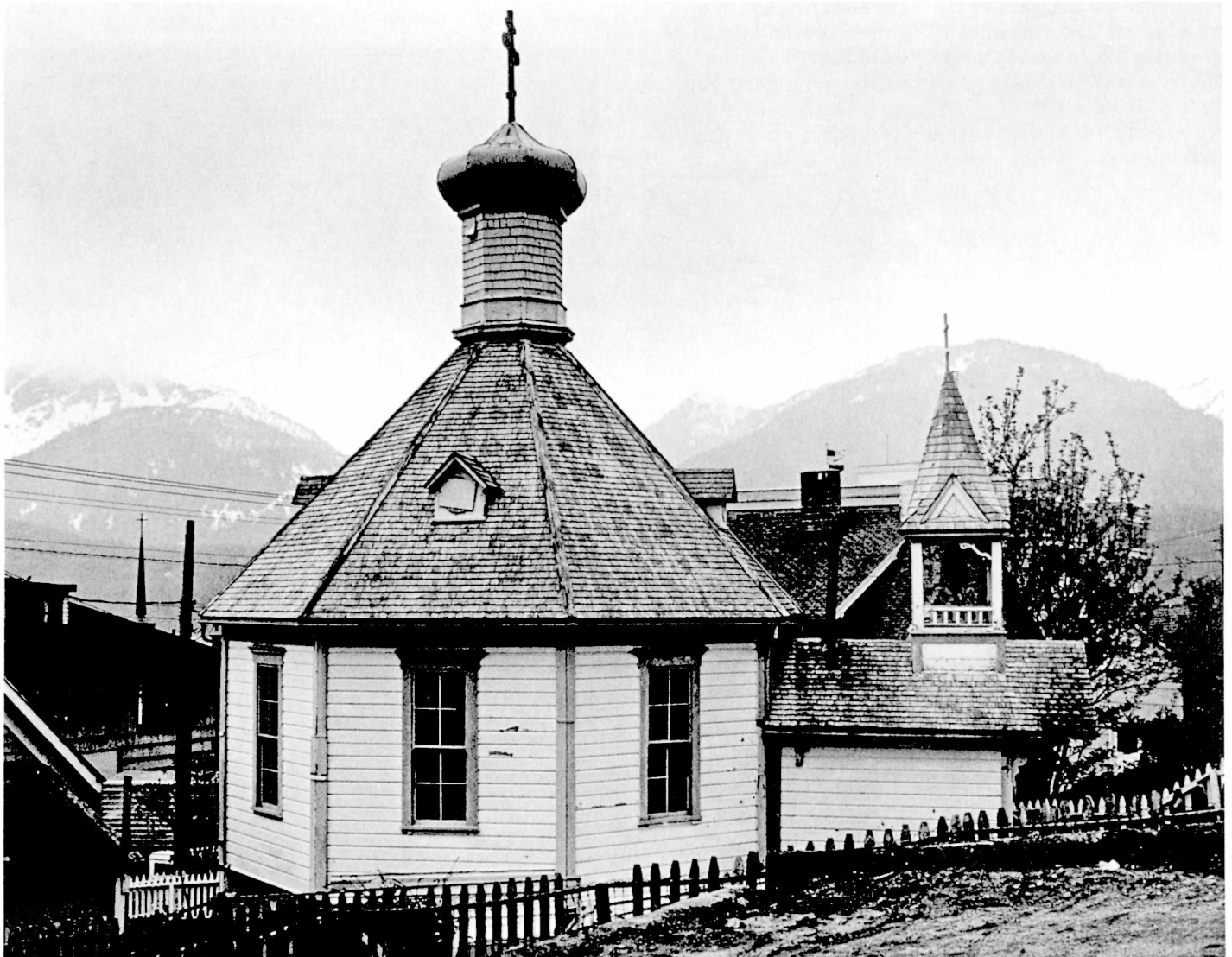


Photo: © Mary Randlett 1974. Courtesy of the National Register.

Rural religious architecture, such as the St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church (1893) in Juneau, Alaska, reflects a unique synthesis of religious symbols, ethnic traditions, and local materials and craftsmanship.

that set up commissions to review new construction, alterations, and demolitions of buildings within historic districts.

HCRS and the SHPOs encourage such local protective measures by making funds available for the identification of areas to be protected and by certifying them so that property owners may take advantage of incentives offered through the Tax Reform Act of 1976. In some states, the SHPO also has an important role as a state official, in reviewing proposed local districts or ordinances. The statewide survey and nomination efforts of the SHPO most often provide important backup for local surveys and inventories. Sometimes a state survey effort identifies a district which becomes listed in the National Register and which later is designated a local historic district. At other times the local district is already in place and a National Register designation is sought subsequently so that owners can take advantage of benefits such as tax incentives and grants-in-aid. No matter which designation comes first, a district with both types of controls and benefits provides more opportunities for historic preservation, using two different but mutually supportive programs.

In the absence of precise statistics, it is difficult to assess the quantitative impact of the National Register on rural America. It is important to bear in mind that the National Register is incomplete. Development trends and land-use patterns change, as do our values and priorities. Fresh scholarly research constantly sheds light on categories of properties which were earlier thought to be insignificant, and there will always be properties which future surveys will "discover."

Identifying Rural Historic Resources

In contrast to the ease of surveying urban areas, where historic resources appear in clusters and groupings, rural areas are more difficult to survey and pose special problems. Sometimes funding is difficult to secure, and rural areas sometimes lack the capability of raising matching monies, particularly those areas distant from large cities and those with inadequate financial resources. Sometimes vast geographic areas must be covered in rural surveys, which presents not only the problem of getting around, but also the problem of finding local individuals with sufficient skill to conduct and support the survey efforts. Sometimes rural residents lack any sense of urgency to do something about their historic resources, which although acknowledged, are taken for granted.

A major problem in surveying rural areas is determining which properties are significant. Because of the broad scope of types of properties eligible for listing in the National Register, it should be recognized that an extremely wide range of rural historic resources could qualify. A resource may be significant in any one of many categories, including agricultural innovations, advancements in animal husbandry, mineral exploration or development, history of the conservation movement, transportation networks, engineering, pioneering and early settlement, development of resorts or recreation potential, and many more depending upon the history of an area. Even within a property's related area of significance, many components need to be evaluated. For example, in an early pioneer settlement, the original house by itself does not give significance to the settlement, but must be evaluated independently. Similarly, farm out-

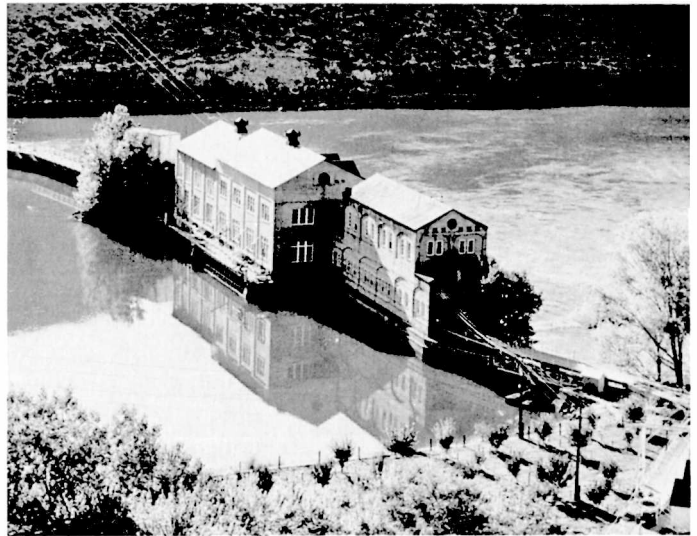


Photo: H.L. Hough. Courtesy of the National Register.

Historically, man has harnessed waterways for energy, water, and transportation—often in rural areas. The Swan Falls Dam and Power Plant (1900–1907) on the Snake River is significant as one of Idaho's first hydroelectric plants, and was listed in the National Register in 1976.

buildings and other remaining physical aspects of the settlement need to be identified and evaluated. A detail as seemingly insignificant as the type of barbed-wire used for fences may be important when comparing the character of one homestead to another. And, because more than building types and styles alone must be recognized, it is sometimes necessary to draw upon the evaluations of specialists in particular fields such as mining, irrigation, cultural geography, forest management, bridge engineering, and agricultural practices.

Another recurring problem is how to deal with open spaces as well as the buildings. Surveys traditionally emphasize man-made artifacts rather than natural resources; however, man's imprint on the land is manifest not only in the buildings and structures that dot the countryside, but also in the land with which these structures are historically associated.

One of the most important and difficult aspects in defining the significance of rural properties is the problem of drawing boundaries. For both legal and practical reasons, it is important to establish clearly those land areas historically associated with a given property. Only land with a provable historic association to the property may be included in the National Register; buffer zones are not eligible.

Several factors should be considered in determining how much acreage should be included in any given nomination. First, if the historic boundaries of the resources are substantially intact and the land generally retains its historic appearance, it should be included. Sometimes, however, agricultural practices alter the overall appearance of the land from that of its period of significance. If the land has been physically changed, or does not resemble its original appearance, it can no longer contribute to the significance of the resource and should not be included in the nomination.

Occasionally the historic ownership of a resource and the land surrounding it does not reflect the actual extent

of the resource. For example, when the vista or historic scenic view is a primary consideration of a property's significance, even though the land may never have been under single ownership, it could be included irrespective of past or present ownership.

Often the potential of the land to yield archeological data is overlooked in the traditional survey or inventory, but the potential for archeological information may exist in any area where there has been an indication of past human activity. Provided that the area included in an archeological site has not been disturbed by earth moving activities, thus destroying the archeological record, the full extent of the archeological material at the site should be included in the nomination. The judgment about archeological site boundaries is best made by a professional archeologist, taking into account the site's ability to yield information about history or prehistory.

As a planning tool, the survey leading to the identification of rural resources for listing in the National Register is often as important as the ultimate listing itself. The initial rural survey must be as comprehensive as possible, since it is difficult for the surveyor to go back for a second look when distances and accessibility are such difficult problems. Often the most convenient approach is to survey all the categories of resources in a given area and break up the surveying into relatively small, manageable units. By comparing similar resource types in a survey area, their relative significance can be more easily established. Clearly establishing the context in which a given resource exists is critical in evaluating resources for National Register purposes, particularly those of local significance.

Adequate geographical coverage of large areas is also a difficult problem. Some SHPOs have dealt with this problem by providing a continuous liaison between their offices and the rural community. In addition, the presence of their staff in the field helps bridge the gap between the community and SHPO.

Such a system, making use of regional planners in the field, is operating in Georgia, and has resulted in considerable progress in surveying rural resources. For example, the Nacoochee Valley in White County was identified in a 1975 broadbrush countywide survey as an area eligible for National Register protection and benefits. This survey resulted in the preparation of a National Register historic district nomination which recognized the cohesive 19th- and early 20th-century rural qualities of the valley, and included 68 primary structures, numerous outbuildings, and 9 archeological sites—all spread over 2,500 acres.

Multiple Resource Nominations

In areas where scattered resources do not constitute an identifiable whole that can be called a district, they must be evaluated individually. The multiple resource nomination avoids the problem of preparing individual National Register nominations, and it expedites the conduct of comprehensive surveys of large areas. By using this approach, one nomination may include all potentially eligible properties and districts for evaluation and listing at one time. The document consists of a cover nomination, accompanied by separate forms and photographs documenting each property for which eligibility is desired. There must be sufficient information about each property to judge it separately according to National Register

criteria. The cover nomination, which accompanies the property inventory sheet, must provide adequate historical and descriptive information for all categories or types of properties included in the nomination. It must also provide information about the scope of the survey and the method of conducting it.

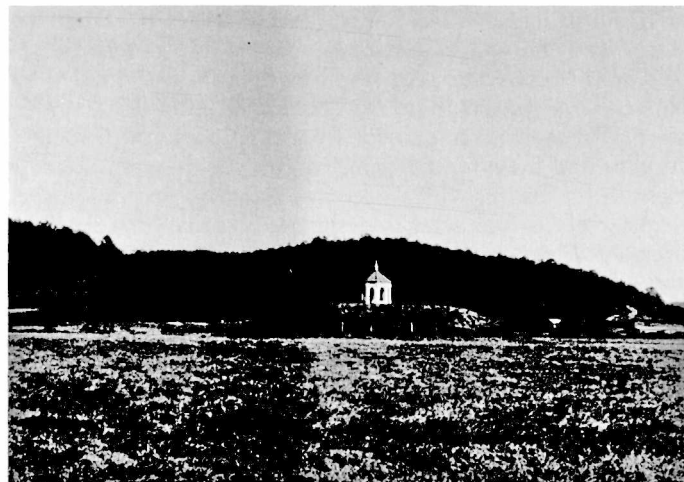


Photo: James R. Lockhart, Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Courtesy of the National Register.

The prehistoric Nacoochee Mound in White County, Georgia, is recognized by the gazebo at its summit. The mound illustrates scenic qualities of the valley believed to be worthy of preservation. Historically rural, this area is approximately 2,500 acres within the Nacoochee Valley National Register Historic District.

This multiple resource format was used successfully to nominate rural properties in Floyd County, Georgia. The survey covered the incorporated limits of Cave Spring, a small community in the rural foothills of the northwest Georgia mountains. Conducted in 1978 by local people with financial help from the National Endowment for the Arts, the survey identified 19 individual properties, some of which were farms of more than 75 acres each, as meeting National Register criteria. Four historic districts were also identified, including a commercial district, a residential district, and two institutional districts. All were nominated together, using the multiple resource nomination format.

The obvious advantage of the multiple resource nomination is that all resources located in any given survey area can be evaluated and processed for National Register listing at the same time. Duplication of effort can be avoided, and a relationship can be described among all the properties evaluated for listing. The format is also extremely helpful in establishing a context for evaluating the local significance of properties included. A complete survey is also very useful for local planning purposes.

Thematic Resource Nominations

Another format with special potential for application in rural areas is the thematic group nomination. As in the case of multiple resource nominations, these usually result from a concentrated survey effort. The difference between the two is that the thematic nomination results from studying a particular category or class of historic resources rather than all resources within a given geographical area. In New York, for instance, thematic

group nominations have been completed for covered bridges in an entire county and for cobblestone houses throughout a large area of the state. Such a nomination may focus on a historical theme, rather than a particular resource. For example, a thematic nomination is being proposed in New York for properties related to the 19th-century women's movement in the area around Seneca Falls.

Whichever format is used, the primary goals of listing in the National Register are the same: to establish the significance of any given resource and to protect it, through federal funding, federal and local planning, leveraging of private investment, and other preservation mechanisms. The National Register has been in existence for 14 years, and has provided many benefits to qualified properties in urban and rural settings. As the National Register continues to grow, it is clear that rural areas will need increasing attention. When a building in a well-organized, tightly packed urban streetscape disappears, everyone notices, but in rural areas, the gradual decay and collapse of an abandoned barn, the over-restoration of a vernacular farm, or the gradual infill of ranch houses along a rural road provides a far more subtle change to the environment. The National Register is a useful tool to help community residents recognize important resources and thereby plan to preserve them.

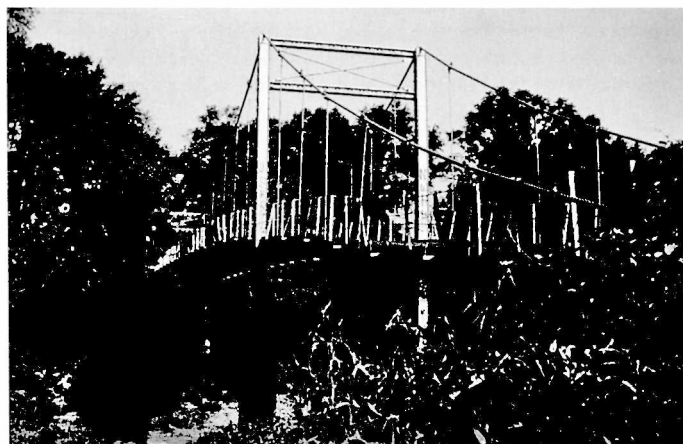


Photo: Jack A. Gold, Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Courtesy of the National Register.

As a result of a survey of state highway bridges conducted by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Division of Historic Preservation, four similar swinging suspension bridges in the southwestern and southcentral section of the state were nominated to the National Register as a thematic group. The Byram Bridge in Hinds and Rankin counties, Mississippi (ca. 1905), expresses the improved structural stability of the larger suspension bridges constructed in the area after 1900.



Photo: B. Michael Zuckerman, Minnesota Historical Society. Courtesy of the National Register.

The Henry Damon Round Barn in Goodhue County, Minnesota, is individually listed in the National Register as part of the Rural Goodhue County Multiple Resource Area. Out of 350 structures surveyed, this barn was selected because it exemplified a type of barn development meeting the special needs of dairy farmers in the early 20th century.

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Department of Archives and History, as deputy SHPO for the same department, and as director of the New England field service office for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He holds a master's degree in architectural history from the University of Virginia.

Suggested Reading

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Smalling, Walter Jr. "Improve Quality of Photos for National Register Nominations." Edited by Robert E. Haynes. *How To 3*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1979. Available through the National Register Publications and Archives, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service: Washington, DC 20243. Free.

National Register. *How to Complete National Register Forms*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1977. Available only through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. GPO Stock No. 024-005-00666-4. Price \$1.35.

Derry, Anne; Jandl, H. Ward; Shull, Carol D.; and Thorman, Jan. *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1977. Available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. GPO Stock No. 024-016-00089-7. Price \$2.50.

National Register of Historic Places. Information leaflet. Available through the National Register Publications and Archives, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Washington, DC 20243. Free.

Chapter 8.

Federal Funds for Historic Preservation in Rural Areas

by Marilyn P. Cable, Ken Pribanic, and
Barbara Hightower Fallin

Federal funds can often provide the stimulus and the necessary resources for the preservation of historic properties in rural areas. Although no one federal program targets money specifically for historic preservation in rural areas, many have been used successfully for this purpose. Summarized here are 18 programs, and 15 projects that have used various funds. Discussed are only those programs with substantial amounts of money available for funding preservation projects through acquisition, rehabilitation, planning, and surveys, as well as for funding jobs to carry out these projects. The programs that rely primarily on market financing are not included.

Historic Preservation Fund Grants Department of the Interior

Under this Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCERS) program, 50 percent matching grants are issued to states, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation; grants to the territories do not have to be matched. Grants are then made by a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to a government subdivision, a private organization, and an individual. Surveys to locate and evaluate historic properties, historic preservation planning, and the acquisition and development of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are activities eligible for funding under this program. The program is particularly attractive because of its wide range of eligible activities and because it is not limited to a particular building type or use. *Detailed information is available from SHPOs or from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243.*

Fish House, Georgetown, Colorado

The Fish House is located in the Georgetown-Silver Plume National Historic Landmark District in Georgetown, Colorado, in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains near the continental divide. Georgetown is about 60 miles west of Denver in an area rapidly developing a lucrative tourist and ski resort economy.

Originally Georgetown developed as a prosperous silver mining district during the 1870s and 1880s. The Fish House, a small clapboard house with Eastlake details, is representative of a number of houses built in Georgetown during the same period.

Grants from the Historic Preservation Fund totaling \$4,550 and matched by the owner have provided for the repointing of the stone foundation of the house, the

restoration of the front porch, and the repair of windows and clapboarding. A recent grant will be used to replace a single stage tower that had been removed from over the main entrance.

Old Bradford County Courthouse, Starke, Florida

The old Bradford County Courthouse is located in the commercial center of Starke, an agricultural market center with a population of about 5,000 in north central Florida. Built in 1902, this Richardsonian Romanesque inspired building is owned by the Bradford County Board of Historical Trustees. Grants from the Historic Preservation Fund in the last 3 years have been used to repoint and restore the brickwork and to repair the roof. A recently awarded \$5,721 grant will be matched by the state to restore and rehabilitate the building's interior to that of the late Depression ambiance of the rear addition to the building.

The building will serve primarily as an income-producing property for the trustees when the rental office spaces are completed. In addition, public meeting space will be provided.

Section 2124, Tax Reform Act of 1976, as Amended

Department of the Treasury and Department of the Interior

Although not providing direct loans or grants, section 2124 of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, as amended, is an important incentive for historic preservation. The act authorizes benefits for preserving income-producing historic structures. Owners or lessees of certified structures may amortize rehabilitation costs over a 5-year period; in the case of substantially rehabilitated structures, depreciation of costs can be accelerated. The reduction of tax incentives for the demolition of historic structures and new construction on their site is further incentive for preservation. Deductions are also allowable for contributions, when made strictly for conservation purposes, to a charitable organization or government agency. Under section 2124, eligible contributions are 1) a lease on, option to purchase, or easement with respect to real property, in perpetuity; or 2) a remainder interest in real property. *Further information can be obtained by contacting either the appropriate SHPO or the Tax Reform Act Unit, Technical Preservation Services Division, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243.*



Photo: Courtesy of the Colorado Historical Society.

The Fish House in Silver Plume National Historic Landmark District in Georgetown, Colorado, is representative of the numerous houses constructed during the mid-1870s boom in silver mining. The building has received money for restoration from the Historic Preservation Fund.

Sloan Insurance Building, Washington, North Carolina

The Sloan Insurance Building in Washington, a town of approximately 10,000 on the Pamlico River in eastern North Carolina, recently was rehabilitated using the benefits provided under section 2124 of the Tax Reform Act. This 3-story, brick building located in a National Register Historic District was built c. 1904 and has housed a farm implements business, a food distributing company, a shoe repair shop, and currently houses the offices of the Sloan Insurance Company. In 1979 the building was rehabilitated at a cost of \$60,000, enabling the owner to amortize the costs of rehabilitation over a 5-year period.

Marks Building, Snohomish, Washington

The accelerated rate of depreciation available under section 2124 of the Tax Reform Act for buildings that have been substantially rehabilitated was used for the Marks Building. Constructed c. 1890, the building has served as a town hall and as commercial stores; it now houses six businesses, including antique and gift shops, a restaurant, an art gallery, a dress shop, and a stained glass studio. More retail shops, offices and/or rental units are slated for future work. A total of \$190,000 has been spent on rehabilitation.

The Marks Building is in the Snohomish City Historic District, a National Register district of buildings dating primarily from 1890 to 1910. The town, located on the Snohomish River, 30 miles northeast of Seattle, has a population of about 5,000.



Photo: McKelden Smith. Courtesy of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

Located in a National Register Historic District in Washington, North Carolina, the Sloan Insurance Building (shown here before rehabilitation) once housed a farm implements business, a food distributing company, a shoe repair shop, and currently the Sloan Insurance Company. Rehabilitation of the building qualified the owner for benefits provided under Section 2124 of the Tax Reform Act of 1976.



Photo: Donald E. Kusler. Courtesy of HCRS Technical Preservation Services.

Substantial rehabilitation of the ca. 1890 Marks Building qualified the owner for an accelerated rate of depreciation under Section 2124 of the Tax Reform Act of 1976. The building is located in the Snohomish Historic District in Snohomish, Washington.

Community Facilities Loans

Department of Agriculture— Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

The Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) loans money at an interest rate of 5 percent. The loans finance construction, enlargement, and extension of public community facilities such as fire stations, libraries, town office buildings, and community centers in rural areas and towns with a population of 10,000 or less. Eligible applicants include counties and municipalities, Indian tribes, and nonprofit organizations. Loans are available only to applicants unable to obtain commercial credit at reasonable rates and terms. Terms are set at the life of the structure, not to exceed 40 years. Although these loans have been used primarily for new construction, the rehabilitation and/or conversion of existing structures to community facilities are also eligible activities. *Application should be made to the appropriate FmHA county or district office. For information on the location of these offices, consult the telephone directory or write Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.*



Photo: Nancy Hale.

Ballard Mill, Malone, New York

This 3-story, brick mill built in 1901 by J. O. Ballard in Malone, a town on the Salmon River in northern New York, manufactured quality woolen clothing for such companies as L. L. Bean and Max Baer. The mill was a major employer for residents until it closed in 1965.

In 1976 the Greater Malone Community Council purchased the Ballard Mill and converted it into a center for the arts. It houses the North Country Community College crafts management course and various craft shops such as the Mohawk Crafts Fund, which markets the products of Indian basket weavers from a nearby reservation. Work on a hydroelectric facility at the mill is continuing. The electricity produced will be used on the property with the surplus sold to the Niagara Mohawk Utility.

Rehabilitation of the mill has been achieved by effectively pyramiding a number of loans and grants from a local bank, private foundations and companies, and state and federal agencies; and by donations of money, materials, and labor from local residents. Most recently, the council received a FmHA Community Facilities Loan for \$75,000 to assist in the conversion of the mill to a center for the arts.

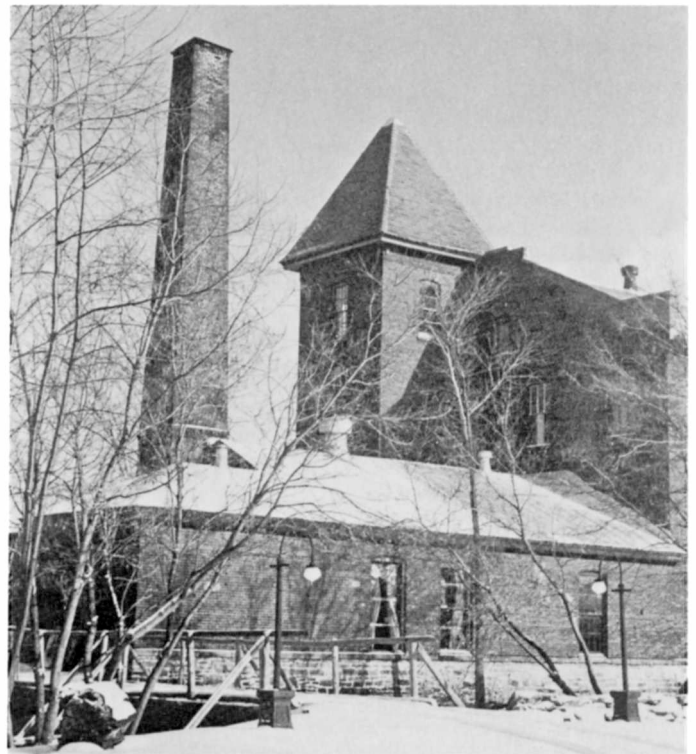


Photo: Rick Auger. Courtesy of the Ballard Mill Center for the Arts.

Vacant from 1965 until its purchase in 1976 by the Greater Malone Community Council, the 1901 Ballard Mill in Malone, New York, has been successfully rehabilitated and converted into a center for the arts. A variety of loans (including an FmHA Community Facilities Loan), grants, and donations of materials and labor have made rehabilitation possible.

Low to Moderate Income Housing Loans (Section 502)

Department of Agriculture—
Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

The Farmers Home Administration makes section 502, insured and guaranteed loans, available to persons in rural areas for the purchase, construction, and repair of homes. Loan recipients must be unable to obtain financing from other sources. Interest credit subsidies available to low-income families through FmHA can be used to reduce the effective rate paid from current interest rates to as low as 1 percent. Loans are repayable over 33 years. The average home financed has 1,107 square feet of living area and generally ranges in cost from \$28,000 to \$35,000. Preservation related activities financed through these loans are the purchase, repair, and rehabilitation of historic homes in rural areas. *Interested persons should contact their local FmHA county supervisor. For information on the location of these offices, consult the telephone directory or write Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.*

Galena, Illinois

Once one of the largest lead mining centers in the world and the wealthiest city in Illinois, with a population of 14,000 to 15,000 during the 1840s and 1850s, Galena is a small town of approximately 4,000. With the closing of the last lead mine in the fall of 1979, residents of Galena have come to depend primarily on farming, light industry, factory work in nearby Dubuque, and tourism for their income. Much of this northwestern Illinois town, located on the Galena River, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Galena Historic District.

Recently, the FmHA has been active in financing home repairs in the Galena area, some of which are in the historic district. The owner of one of these houses, built about 1855 by a Swiss carpenter in the typical lead mine region style, received a section 502 loan of \$2,000 for painting, remodeling the kitchen, and insulation. Another owner received a smaller loan for the installation of electrical service.

Very Low-Income Housing Repair Loans and Grants (Section 504)

Department of Agriculture—
Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

With its section 504 program, the Farmers Home Administration makes loans to very low-income owner/occupants to finance essential repairs resulting in the removal of health hazards. The loans are available only to those persons not qualifying for section 502 loans and are limited to \$7,500, with repayment over 20 years, at an interest rate of 1 percent. Grants up to \$5,000 are awarded according to income to people 62 and over, who are unable to repay a loan. These loans and grants finance such preservation related activities as weatherizing, repairing roofs, and correcting structural defects in existing homes. *For further information and an application, contact the appropriate FmHA county office. For information on the location of these offices, consult the*

telephone directory or write Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

Island Pond, Vermont

The small town of Island Pond in northeastern Vermont developed as a result of the construction of the Grand Trunk/Canadian National Railways in 1853. On the line midway between Portland, Maine, and Montreal, the town was one of the most important ports of entry for rail traffic into the United States. Growth of Island Pond ended in the late 1920s with the rerouting of rail traffic to Canadian ports.

Most of the town is in the National Register Island Pond Historic District. A homeowner within the district recently received federal funds for weatherization and repairs to the house. The programs used include a FmHA section 504 grant for \$5,000, a HUD Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) described below, and a Weatherization Assistance Grant from the Department of Energy. The work was performed by Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) employees (see below). The house was built in 1859 as the first St. James Roman Catholic Church, serving later as the church chancel and vestry and as a private residence after 1898, when it was moved a short distance north of its original site.

Rural Rental Housing Loans

Department of Agriculture—
Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

Insured loans from this program are available for constructing, purchasing, or rehabilitating multiple-unit rental or cooperatively owned housing in rural areas for low- or moderate-income families, handicapped persons, or those over 62. Financial assistance is available to owners through an interest credit program which reduces the interest rate to as low as 1 percent. Eligible applicants include individuals, nonprofit organizations, cooperatives, corporations, trusts, partnerships, and limited partnerships if each is unable to obtain sufficient financing elsewhere. State and local private agencies are also eligible applicants even though they may be able to obtain help elsewhere. Occupants are aided by two subsidy programs, FmHA rental assistance and HUD section 8, which pay the difference between a portion of the occupant's salary and the total rent. Loans that average \$1 million to \$1.2 million are made at the current interest rate with a maximum term of 50 years. The purchase and rehabilitation and/or conversion of large historic structures such as hotels, industrial buildings, hospitals, or schools to rental or cooperative units is of particular interest to preservationists. *Applications for loans should be made to the appropriate FmHA district office. For information on the location of these offices, consult the telephone directory or write Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.*

Great Northern Hotel, Devil's Lake, North Dakota

Advertised as the best hotel west of the Twin Cities when built in 1910, the Great Northern Hotel is being rehabilitated and converted into senior citizens' housing.

The 3-story, triangular, brick building which occupies a whole block will contain 38 apartments and 5,000 square feet of commercial space. A rent payment contract has been made through HUD's section 8 program, described below, to pay the difference between what elderly occupants pay and the market rent. Without the aid of a FmHA Rural Rental Housing Loan in excess of \$1 million, the developer would not have been able to rehabilitate the building.

The hotel is located in the town of Devil's Lake, in a predominantly agricultural area near the Fort Totten Indian Reservation and Devil's Lake in eastern North Dakota. Work is underway to nominate the hotel to the National Register of Historic Places.



Photo: Arvid Elness Architects, Inc., Minneapolis. Courtesy of the Farmers Home Administration.

With the aid of an FmHA Rural Rental Housing Loan, the Great Northern Hotel in Devil's Lake, North Dakota, is being rehabilitated and converted into senior citizens' housing. The triangular building, which occupies a whole block, was built in 1910.

Rural Rental Assistance Payments

Department of Agriculture—
Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

Senior citizens and low-income occupants of eligible Rural Rental Housing, Rural Cooperative Housing, and Farm Labor Housing projects, financed by FmHA loans, can receive rental assistance. Under this program, FmHA pays the difference between 25 percent of the occupant's adjusted annual income and the FmHA approved rental rate. Only nonprofit organizations, state or local agencies, and organizations or individuals who agree to operate the housing on a limited profit basis are eligible to apply. Newly constructed and rehabilitated projects using the HUD section 8 program are ineligible for FmHA rental assistance. *Application should be made to the appropriate FmHA district office. For information on the location of these offices, consult the telephone directory or write Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.*

Farm Ownership Loans

Department of Agriculture—
Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

Loans for the purchase and improvement of family farms are available to eligible applicants unable to obtain sufficient credit from other sources, through the FmHA's Farm Ownership Loan program. Direct loans are limited to \$200,000 and guaranteed loans to \$300,000; each have a maximum repayment term of 40 years. The interest rate on insured loans is currently set at 11 percent with a rate of 5 percent for low-income families. The rate for guaranteed loans is negotiated between the applicant and the lender. Preservation activities eligible under this program are the purchase, repair, and rehabilitation of farm structures including farmhouses, barns, outbuildings, and other structures such as recreational facilities involved in producing nonfarm income. *Application should be made to the appropriate FmHA county office. For information on the location of these offices, consult the telephone directory or write Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.*

Barn, Piermont, New Hampshire

This barn near Piermont, New Hampshire, a small dairy farming community with a population of 462, was built in 1906 on the site of two earlier barns. The 2-story barn is 80 feet in diameter and, according to the owner, is probably the only 16-sided barn in the area. A \$40,000 Farm Ownership Loan from FmHA was made to the owner for the purchase of farmland and repairs to the farm buildings. Both the barn and the 19th-century farmhouse were painted, and a windowsill and clapboarding were replaced on the exterior of the barn.



Photo: Courtesy of George Schmid.

An FmHA Farm Ownership Loan financed repairs to the 19th-century farmhouse and 16-sided barn built in 1906 on the George Schmid farm in Piermont, New Hampshire.

Farm Operating Loans

Department of Agriculture— Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

Through FmHA's Farm Operating Loans, financing is available at current interest rates to eligible individuals, partnerships, corporations, or cooperatives for minor real estate improvements of up to \$7,500, the purchase of livestock and equipment, nonfarm enterprises to supplement farm income, income-producing youth projects, and refinancing of debts. Direct loans, which are limited to \$100,000, and guaranteed loans, which are limited to \$200,000, must be used on family-size farms, and applicants must not be able to obtain sufficient credit elsewhere. Loans are made for a term of up to 7 years. Preservation activities eligible under this program include minor real estate improvements and nonfarm enterprises such as recreational facilities. *Application should be made to the appropriate FmHA county office. For information on the location of these offices, consult the telephone directory or write Farmers Home Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.*

Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The Small Cities Grants are for projects benefitting low- and moderate-income persons in communities and counties of less than 50,000 in population. This competitive program is administered by HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development. The same community development activities funded in the entitlement grant program for large cities are eligible for funding under the small cities program.

Grants are awarded after a two-step application process to states and units of local government for disbursement on approved projects. Program objectives include the promotion of housing choices for low- and moderate-income families outside areas of minority and low- and moderate-income concentrations, the promotion of more rational land use, and the correction of deficiencies in public facilities, which affect the public health and safety, especially of low- and moderate-income persons. Some historic preservation related activities that are eligible for funding include historic resource surveys; preservation plans; acquisition; rehabilitation; development of codes, ordinances, and regulations to implement a plan; establishment of financial programs, such as low-interest loans and grants for rehabilitation of historically and architecturally significant structures; creation of a revolving fund for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and disposition of historic structures; and easement programs. Grants averaging between \$350,000 and \$700,000 are awarded for specified project completion schedules. Recently, areas with less than 10,000 population have received 40 percent of all grant monies. *Detailed information on the grant program and application deadlines are available from the appropriate HUD area office or by writing Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410.*

Westfield, Massachusetts

A Small Cities Grant implementation program underway in Westfield, Massachusetts, combines housing rehabilitation with a craftsmen training program. Located in the western third of the state, Westfield has slightly under 30,000 people, with an industrial and commercial economic base. Housing rehabilitation is leveraged with CETA (see below) funds to maintain a training program for Hispanics and high school students with apprentices from the Carpenters' Local 32.

Awarded six consecutive grants by HUD totaling \$2.1 million, the Westfield administrators are currently rehabilitating eight units. When completed, the houses, like others that have been rehabilitated, will be sold to low- and moderate-income families with profits providing capital to purchase additional homes. Some previously rehabilitated homes have been retained by the city to house municipally sponsored humanitarian organizations.



Photo: Courtesy of the Westfield, Massachusetts' Department of Community Development.

The CDBG program will provide funds to acquire and accurately restore the exterior of the Landlord Fowler Tavern, a 1775 gambrel-roofed tavern in Westfield, Massachusetts. A private investor, holding title to the property, will rehabilitate the interior for lease of four living units to low- and moderate-income senior citizens.



Photo: Courtesy of the Westfield, Massachusetts' Department of Community Development.

Cowles Court Redevelopment Project, Westfield, Massachusetts. Part of six units being rehabilitated for low-income large families with HUD's CDBG money for small cities. When completed the units will be managed by the Westfield Housing Authority.

Comprehensive Planning Assistance Grants (701 Grants)

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Government units or planning organizations are eligible to receive Comprehensive Planning Assistance Grants. These funds are available for preservation-related activities, as long as the activities clearly relate to achieving the three national policy objectives, which grew out of the President's Urban Policy Statement on March 27, 1978: 1) conservation and improvement of existing communities, 2) expansion of housing and employment opportunities and choices for the poor, minorities, and the disadvantaged, and 3) promotion of orderly and efficient growth and development. The following preservation related activities are eligible: development of criteria for evaluation of historic properties; surveys; identification of historic properties subject to destruction or deterioration; consideration of the relationship of historic properties to other elements of comprehensive planning in the jurisdiction; in conjunction with planning, the determination of preliminary cost estimates for rehabilitation or restoration of significant buildings or districts; preparation of district legislation, model preservation contracts, and general administrative and budgetary measures necessary to implement the grant; and preparation of a historic preservation program outlining action needed. *For additional information write the appropriate HUD area office, or Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410.*

Abita Springs, Louisiana

A historic sites inventory for an 1880s-1920s mineral springs resort was funded with a \$4,000 HUD 701 Com-70



Photo: Courtesy of the Westfield, Massachusetts' Department of Community Development.

prehensive Planning Assistance Grant. Waters at Abita Springs, located about 40 miles north of New Orleans, were found to be of medicinal quality in 1888, and shortly afterward construction began on resort hotels, boardinghouses, boat houses, and detached residences believed stylistically unique to Abita Springs.

Awarded in June 1979, the grant has been used to research and inventory buildings, particularly the houses, dating from the heyday of the resort. The survey will provide a basis for this town of 1,023 residents to formulate a revitalization plan designed to attract an active tourist and camper business from nearby recreation areas.



Photo: Courtesy of the St. Tammany Parish Planning Commission.

A vernacular house, identified as the Abita Springs style, in Abita Springs, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, is one of a variety of raised shingle cottages popular in this late-19th-century mineral resort. Frame hotels, bathhouses, and churches were related in design to this.

Section 8

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Section 8 encourages the provision of lower income housing through rent payment contracts with property owners. HUD agrees to pay the difference between what a low-income family can pay and the reasonable rent on new, substantially rehabilitated, moderately rehabilitated, or existing rental units. Owners must find their own sources of funding for construction or rehabilitation, and buildings must meet appropriate standards. Elderly residents of the rehabilitated Great Northern Hotel in Devil's Lake, North Dakota, described above, will receive assistance through this program. *For more information, write the appropriate HUD area office, or Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410.*

Senior Community Service Employment Program

Department of Labor

Under the Senior Community Service Employment Program, the Department of Labor makes grants available to states, U.S. territories, and eight national nonprofit organizations to fund part-time community service jobs for persons over 55. People hired must have poor employment prospects and fill jobs not already being paid for by local dollars. Monies are allocated for use in each state based on the state's percentage of older workers at the poverty level. The program was recently expanded by 10 percent, raising the number of jobs funded from 47,500 to 52,000. Under this program, preservation related jobs include the reconstruction, minor repair, rehabilitation, and general maintenance of historic structures; museum employment; research; and demonstration of skills and crafts. *Interested job sponsors should contact the appropriate State Office on Aging, the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of Labor, or one of the following national organizations receiving funds: the National Council on the Aging, the National Retired Teachers Association, the National Council of Senior Citizens, the National Association of Pro-Spanish Speaking Elderly, the National Center for the Black Aged, the National Urban League, or Green Thumb, Inc.*

Pope County Historical Society Museum, Golconda, Illinois

Constructed about 100 years ago, the museum, one of the oldest buildings in Golconda, originally served as a tavern where the elite of the steamboat trade met to negotiate potato sales. The building later became the home of the Trovillions, a pioneer family of the town. In 1965, the house was purchased by the Pope County Historical Society and converted into a museum.

Much of the restoration work over the last 3 years has been done by senior citizens whose salaries are paid by Green Thumb, Inc., one of the eight national nonprofit organizations receiving funds through the Senior Community Service Employment Program. Salaries paid through this program have been in excess of \$54,000.

Green Thumb workers continue to be employed by the museum in its ongoing restoration work and in the museum's Not-So-New Shop, a source of financial support for the museum. Located in an area of small farms and coal and spar mining along the Ohio River in southeastern Illinois, Golconda has a high rate of unemployment. Jobs made possible through Green Thumb have helped to alleviate a small portion of this problem as well as to make work on the museum possible.



Photo: Courtesy of the Illinois Department of Conservation.

The Pope County Historical Society Museum in Golconda, Illinois, originally served as a tavern where the elite of the steamboat trade met to negotiate potato sales, and later as the home of one of the community's pioneer families. Older workers whose salaries are paid by Green Thumb Inc., one of the national organizations receiving funds through the Department of Labor's Senior Service Employment Program, have helped restore the museum.

Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA)

Department of Labor

Under CETA, eligible local and state governments may act as prime sponsors to receive funds for various employment services, including manpower services, on-the-job training, and public service employment programs. Funds are distributed to prime sponsors based on the area unemployment and may be used only for salaries and benefits, not for materials. CETA employees can provide preservation services that might include working for a local nonprofit organization (such as a museum or a historical society). They might receive training on a construction/restoration site, or might work in a historic property. CETA workers performed preservation related jobs in Island Pond, Vermont (see above), where they weatherized and repaired a home in that community's historic district. In Westfield, Massachusetts (see above), Hispanics and high school students are being trained in housing rehabilitation through a program funded by CETA. *For more information, write a local prime sponsor, or the state employment service or manpower agency to determine the prime sponsor for the area.*

Public Works Grants and Loans

Department of Commerce—

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

Matching grants, direct loans, and guaranteed private sector loans are available from the Public Works Grants and Loans program. The primary objective of the program is to initiate and encourage long-term employment in designated redevelopment areas through the construction and rehabilitation of public works facilities. Areas are selected because of their lagging economic growth and unemployment. Loans and matching grants, through the Economic Development Administration's regional offices, are available to states and their political subdivisions, Indian tribes, and private or public nonprofit organizations. Historic preservation projects funded through this program have included downtown revitalizations, the rehabilitation and weatherization of courthouses and other public buildings, and the development of museum and tourist related facilities. *For additional information contact the appropriate EDA regional office or Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230.*

Mesilla Plaza, Mesilla, New Mexico

The plaza, the center of activity for this small agricultural town in the fertile Mesilla Valley of the Rio Grande, has been recently restored to its former beauty. Previously, the plaza had become overgrown, without drainage, and neglected and underused; residents were even fearful of entering it after dusk.

With a labor intensive Public Works Investment grant from EDA, the plaza has been changed into a safe and clean high activity area. Twenty unemployed men from the town paved streets, installed storm sewers, laid brick sidewalks, replaced blighted elm trees, and placed utilities underground. Cast-iron benches based on designs from the Spanish Colonial era, a new bandstand, and appropriate light standards have been installed. The plaza refurbishing has induced private-sector investment in the restoration of buildings around the plaza. As a result, retail sales are up and some restaurants have been opened.

Section 501 and 502 Company Loans

Small Business Administration (SBA)

The Small Business Administration's program of direct and guaranteed loans to state and local development companies assists eligible small businesses with long-term financing. These development companies in turn can provide loans for acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation expenses for a maximum of 25 years; the company itself generally providing 10 percent of the total loan. Local development companies are eligible on a profit/nonprofit basis if they are incorporated under a general state corporation statute. Direct loans averaging \$130,000 and guaranteed loans averaging \$250,000 are administered by 10 regional and 100 district offices in most major cities of the country. *For additional information contact the local SBA office or Office of Neighborhood Business Revitalization, Small Business Administration, 1441 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20416.*

Mansion House, Watsonville, California

An SBA Company loan, leveraged with city and private monies and HUD 312 funds, was used to renovate and restore a deteriorated commercial building in Watsonville, California. The building is located on Main Street in this town of about 15,000, a hundred miles south of San Francisco. Primarily an agricultural region whose principal crop is artichokes, Watsonville has a nearly balanced population of Mexican and native U.S. residents.

The Mansion House is a 3-story, 15,000-square-foot Second Empire style building, constructed in 1871 as a hotel and restaurant. The building deteriorated and in 1978 it was to be demolished. Recommended for nomination to the National Register, it has received rehabilitation work such as gutting of the interior, stabilizing and restoring the walls, and installing new plumbing and electrical work. The renovated spaces will accommodate a restaurant on the first floor and professional suites and offices on the two upper floors.

Regular Business Loans (7 (a) Loans)

Small Business Administration (SBA)

This loan program of the SBA provides direct and guaranteed loans to agricultural enterprises and small businesses that are not dominant in their fields and are unable to secure private sector credit. Maximum direct loans of \$350,000 and guaranteed loans of \$500,000 are available on a 7- to 10-year repayment basis. Applications are processed through SBA district and regional offices to credit worthy applicants for acquisition, conversion, expansion, and equipment expenditures. Of particular use for preservation are the acquisition and conversion potentials of the program for historic properties. *Detailed information is available from SBA district offices or Small Business Administration, Director, Office of Financing, 1441 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20416.*

Cedarhurst, Cottage Grove, Minnesota

Cedarhurst, a large double portico mansion in Cottage Grove, near St. Paul, Minnesota, has recently been renovated into a multiuse building. Constructed in three phases between 1860 and 1917, the 26-room (plus ballroom) house is the residence and work place of a family whose members operate a catering service and interior design studio. Part of the house is also restored as a museum.

Enlarged to its present proportions by architect Cass Gilbert in 1917, Cedarhurst was the country home of a prominent St. Paul attorney. Passing by inheritance to relatives and then sold to nonfamily buyers, the fate of the house was uncertain until purchased by the present owners. Financial assistance from the SBA for adapting and repairing part of the home for catering facilities has ensured the continued use and preservation of the house.

Conclusion

This summary of federal programs that assist historic preservation in rural areas and of projects using these programs is designed to stimulate other preservation work. The material can be used as an introductory

source of federal loan and grant information, and the programs can be investigated further to see how they may apply to other specific areas. The references listed in the bibliography provide additional information on these and other possible sources of federal funding. The *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* is a comprehensive listing and description of federal programs and is available in many libraries. Recently revised by the HCRS Preservation Planning Branch; "Sources of Preser-

vation Funding" summarizes current information not included in either of the National Trust publications describing federal sources of preservation funding. "Winning Federal Grants" outlines useful tips in successfully applying for federal funds. "Federal Funds Preserve Engineering Structures" discusses 17 federal programs that can be used to preserve engineering and/or industrial structures and 20 specific projects that have used the programs are explored.

Marilyn P. Cable has been a preservation planner with the Department of the Interior since 1974. Throughout this period, she has worked with other federal agencies on preservation matters and has developed materials on various sources of federal funding for preservation activities. She has contributed to many publications on historic preservation and community planning and development topics and has been a speaker at innumerable conferences and workshops. From 1968 to 1974, Ms. Cable worked on the local level in Washington, D.C., stimulating and managing rehabilitation and redevelopment projects. Prior to that time, she worked for the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and has received a number of other awards.

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Barbara Hightower Fallin, a historian, was with the Preservation Planning Branch of the Division of State Plans and Grants when this chapter was written. She is currently attending George Washington University where she is working on a master's degree in American Studies with a concentration in historic preservation, and is working in HCRS' Division of Environmental and Compliance Review. She has a B.A. in history and art history from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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Chapter 9.

Federal Programs to Preserve Natural and Recreational Resources in Rural America

by Barry S. Tindall

The struggle between the desire to conserve and the need to develop land has moved into the rural arena. Every day, decisions are made that influence the future shape and character of the rural landscape. Most of these decisions are made by private landowners and local governments, but often they are made or influenced by state governments, or by federal policies and programs. Collectively, these single public and private decisions will be instrumental in shaping the fabric of the rural landscape and they affect all of us—city dwellers, suburbanites, and rural residents—to the extent that special natural and cultural resources are conserved and recreation opportunities are made available.

The federal role in the provision of recreation and the protection of natural resources in rural areas and small communities falls into four major categories: 1) technical assistance to help strengthen the ability of citizens to make wise decisions, to evaluate needs and priorities, and to implement projects; 2) planning assistance and coordination; 3) grants for acquisition of resources and development of recreational facilities, loan guarantees for private recreational development, other funding sources, and incentives; and 4) the evaluation and designation of special resources and protection of those resources through recognition or regulation.

The current *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* describes approximately 120 recreation-related federal programs, which can be used both to provide recreation opportunities and to protect natural resources. This article describes some of the most significant of these federal assistance programs.

Planning Assistance and Coordination

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund was established by the Congress in 1965 to increase public outdoor recreation opportunities. The fund provides matching grants to states for the acquisition and development of recreation areas. Matching grants are also available for state recreation and resource planning activities.

Over half of the states have used Land and Water Conservation Fund planning grants to carry out systematic natural resource inventories as part of state natural heritage programs. Information about significant ecological and geological features is organized in a data management system and made available to public and private planners for use in project location and design, environmental review, planning for natural area protection, resource development, and for research and education purposes. *Specific information on project applica-*

tion procedures is available from the state outdoor recreation liaison officer (SLO) located in each state or from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243. Contact the Office of the Governor for the SLO's name and telephone number.

State of Minnesota¹

Minnesota is at ecological crossroads. Here the northern conifer forests, the eastern deciduous woodlands, and the western prairies converge, each bringing with it an array of specialized plant and animal species. Despite more than a century of human impact, the state's forests, grasslands, and wetlands still harbor examples of diverse and often rare plants and animals.

But increased population, technology, and the impact of development have all contributed to the number of plant and animal species that are in danger of disappearing.

To assess the condition of its natural heritage on a systematic basis, the state has used a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to help establish the



Photo: Susan Bournique. Courtesy of the Nature Conservancy.

Ordway Prairie in Pope County, Minnesota, is characterized by small hills of morainic material covered with trees and grasses. To date 9,100 acres of prairie in Minnesota have become preserves under the leadership of the Minnesota Natural Heritage Program. A grant from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund helped establish the program.

¹ Adapted from *Minnesota's Natural Heritage*, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Minnesota Natural Heritage program. The Minnesota Natural Heritage program has a number of objectives and advantages.

- A method for establishing priorities. The program is an inventory process for identifying and locating significant natural elements, including geological features, plants, animals, and natural communities, most of which need some form and degree of protection.
- An integrated data management system. This is a combination of computer, map, and manual files that offer a cost-effective approach to retrieval and analysis of the location, distribution, ownership, and present status of special natural features.
- A planning tool. The information thus provided is useful to planners and others interested in conservation of lands as well as to those involved with public and private development projects.
- A centralized system. Information previously scattered among many agencies and places is consolidated in one data base available to all users. The data are continuously updated as new information becomes available.

The information available in the state natural heritage system has many practical applications:

- Natural area protection programs, for which the data can help identify those areas most in need of protection;
- Environmental review programs, in which planners use the information to evaluate the impacts of route and site proposals for development projects;
- Natural resource development programs, in which the data are helpful in steering developers' projects to the least sensitive lands; and
- Research and education programs, for which the data are useful as a means of encouraging scientists and educators to focus their attention on key natural areas.

Data stored in "state heritage systems" can frequently be used in combination with other allied information systems.

Resource Conservation and Development

The Department of Agriculture's Resource Conservation and Development Program provides planning and financial help from federal and state sources to improve the natural, economic, and other resources in a project area. Recreation is often a high priority of local participants. Particular care is taken to assure that project plans and activities do not result in ecological damage to sites important for their natural values.

Resource conservation and development assistance is provided through a local conservation district affiliated with the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Public and private recreation projects have been planned and developed in various ways, and many different types and sources of assistance have been used. Under this program, USDA may pay up to 50 percent of the project costs, including the provision of recreation facilities. Project operating and maintenance costs are assumed by the local sponsors, who may also qualify for low-cost loans through the Farmers Home Administration.

To receive conservation district assistance, a landowner, a group of owners, or a unit of government submits a formal request. Usually, those requesting assis-

tance are asked to make some commitment toward conservation objectives, which are compatible with conservation district programs and long-range plans. The district then calls on the appropriate government agency or private organizations to help the land users or groups solve soil, water, or other conservation problems.

In most cases under this program the conservation district helps the landowner develop a conservation plan for the property with professional assistance. The plan takes into account both the landowner's desires and the potentials and limitations of natural resources. The plan may include a section on recreation. *For further information contact the Administrator, Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.*

Wadena County, Minnesota

The Wadena County Conservation District and three other districts joined together in 1963 to establish the Wesmin Resource Conservation and Development area. A major objective of the planners for the district was to improve public recreation opportunities in the area, and to encourage associated economic growth. An achievement of the district in this respect was the creation of the 75-mile long Crow-Wing Canoe Trail. The success of this project leads directly to several other recreation efforts in the state, including the 150-mile Glacial Ridge Scenic Trail and the establishment of three state parks.

Clean Water for Recreation

Rural communities can obtain recreation benefits from at least two grant-in-aid programs provided by the Clean Water Act of 1977. Local government applicants for water quality management planning grants (authorized by section 208 of the act) and waste-water treatment facility construction grants (authorized by section 201) must identify how recreation and open space opportunities can result from improved water quality, and assess the feasibility of providing for recreation during actual facility development.

A section 208 water quality management plan is a strategy developed by a designated state or areawide agency to prevent, reduce, and ultimately eliminate water pollution. The plan must include control measures for all sources of pollution in the planning area. As part of the plan, funds can be used to address both recreation and open space elements. This analysis must respond to present needs and reasonably anticipate the future.

To include recreation and open space plans in publicly funded water related projects is not new. Timely public involvement in the planning process and in facilities planning has resulted in creation of linear parks for hiking, jogging, bicycling, cross-country skiing, and equestrian activities on drainage and interceptor rights-of-way; and swimming and picnicking areas, fishing piers, boat launch ramps, environmental education opportunities, and general public access at the treatment site. Land-use control measures may protect natural areas, while at the same time providing increased recreation opportunities. *For more information, contact the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243, or the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW, Washington, DC 20460.*

Reclamation of Surface Mined Lands

Many rural regions contain areas previously disturbed by surface mining activities. Through reclamation, some of these can provide a variety of recreation opportunities.

The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 established an Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund to aid and encourage the restoration of land and water resources and improve the general environment from the adverse effects of coal mining. This fund is administered by the Department of the Interior, and reclamation objectives may include the conservation and development of woodlands, fish and wildlife, recreation and agriculture, among others. Eligible lands and waters are those that were previously mined for coal or that were affected by mining, including waste banks and coal processing sites. Lands may have been either abandoned or inadequately reclaimed. Proposed projects must be a component of a state reclamation plan submitted annually to the Secretary of the Interior for approval. Several states have received advance funds to help identify lands, rivers, lakes, and streams adversely affected by past mining practices and not fully reclaimed.

Reclamation project selection and review goes on continuously. Potential projects can be nominated by interested individuals or public interest groups, as well as by other state or federal agencies. When a project is proposed in this manner, however, the Office of Surface Mining consults with state reclamation agencies to determine how much support exists for the project, and will contact other federal and state agencies to avoid duplication of effort.

Under the act, the USDA also administers a Rural Abandoned Mine program to aid in the reclamation of mines in 29 coal-producing states. The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to enter into agreements for periods of up to 10 years with private landowners to restore unreclaimed lands for several purposes, one of which is recreation. Farmland owners or users share in the reclamation costs.

In 1979, the Soil Conservation Service, USDA's lead reclamation agency, signed 63 long-term contracts with 13 states, obligating about \$6.4 million. *Information on the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act and the Reclamation Fund are available from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.*

Information on the Rural Abandoned Mine program is available from the Administrator, Soil Conservation Service, USDA, Washington, DC 20250 or from state or county agriculture agents.

Coastal Zone Planning and Management

The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 authorizes the expenditure of funds for a range of resource planning functions. The principal planning document, a state coastal zone management plan, is prepared by the respective coastal states (including the Great Lake states), approved by the Secretary of Commerce, and periodically updated. Grants are available for the preparation of coastal zone management plans, and once those plans are approved by the Secretary of Commerce, additional money is available for program implementation. There are currently 19 states with federally

approved programs covering more than 67 percent of the nation's shoreline.

Annual federal grants to the states may include funds for an inventory and designation of areas of particular concern within the coastal zone, including areas with special recreation or open-space values. State and local governments which use federal funds from non-Coastal Zone Management Act programs affecting the state's coastal zone must describe the relationship between these activities and the approved coastal management program. *For more information contact the Director, Coastal Zone Management Programs, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2001 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20235.*

Funding Assistance and Incentives

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Mentioned earlier was the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which was established in 1965 to increase public outdoor recreation opportunities. The program is mentioned again here for its use in the acquisition of lands for federally administered parks, wildlife refuges, and recreation areas, and for its matching grants for several state outdoor recreation functions. Grants to the states and through them to their political subdivisions are principally for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Project grants must be matched by not less than an equal amount of nonfederal funds or other resources.

Before a state or its political subdivisions may receive grants from the fund, the state must develop and maintain a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan. The state plan identifies capital investment priorities for acquiring, developing, and protecting outdoor recreation resources within the state; assures continuing opportunity for local units of government and private citizens to take part in outdoor recreation and environmental planning programs; and provides a tool for coordinating all state outdoor recreation and environmental conservation programs.

State comprehensive outdoor recreation plans frequently address the particular recreation needs of rural communities and the preservation of natural environments.

Assistance is available only for public projects. State or local government participants must agree to dedicate projects permanently to public outdoor recreation use and assume responsibility for continuing operation and maintenance. *Specific information on project application procedures is available from the state outdoor recreation liaison officer (referred to as the SLO) located in each state.*

Leonard Mill Park, Maryland

Leonard Mill Park, on U.S. 13 between Salisbury and Delmar, Maryland, was a trash dump. Frequent burning of trash contributed to local air pollution problems, and surface water runoff from it added a variety of pollutants to a nearby 20-acre millpond.

Today the scene is remarkably different. This once degraded site is a delightful 10-acre park, with freshwater streams meandering through wooded areas toward a sandy beach and boating area.

With improvements financed in part by a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Maryland's "Program Open Space," the water-oriented aspects of the project include an improved mill dam, a bathhouse, float, lifeguard stands, and boat launch ramp. Other facilities include trails, footbridges, and sports, picnicking, and parking areas.

The park substantially contributes to the recreation opportunities of local residents and provides an aesthetically pleasing experience for tourists on this heavily used route.

Leonard Mill Park, and scores of similar projects in Maryland, demonstrate how federal and state grant programs may be effectively linked together. Money for Maryland's Program Open Space is made available from the Outdoor Recreation Land Loan of 1969, supported by an authorization for the issuance of \$82 million in state bonds, and a 0.05 percent state transfer tax used to retire any bonds issued for the program.

Roadside Beautification

The scenic beauty and ecological integrity of the rural landscape is influenced by the attention given to the planning, improvement, and general maintenance of roadways and adjacent properties. For instance, the growth of native vegetation, including wildflowers, can be encouraged by restricting roadside mowing either to areas clearly required for public safety or to limited fre-

quency, usually once annually after all species have flowered.

Where right-of-way landscaping is necessary, the use of indigenous wildflowers provides one approach to low-cost landscaping and reduced maintenance costs. A national roadside wildflower program known as "Operation Wildflower" promotes the planting and use of wildflowers along federal-aid highways.

Under this program, a state federation of garden clubs, a member club of a state federation, garden clubs, or individuals may pay for or furnish indigenous wildflower seeds, bulbs, and/or other propagative material for planting to its state highway agency. The state highway agency determines the appropriate locations for the wildflowers and the method of planting.

Wildflower seeding may also be done as an element of erosion control in the construction of a federal-aid highway, or in association with specific landscaping projects on federal-aid highways as a part of the seeding or planting process. Federal-aid highway funds may be used for these purposes. Scenic strip interests may also be acquired in urban or rural areas, combined in one or more projects, or authorized separately whether or not there is or has been a federal-aid project on the adjoining federal-aid highway.

Federal aid is also available for the removal of abandoned motor vehicles from the right-of-way and from private lands adjacent to federal-aid highways and for

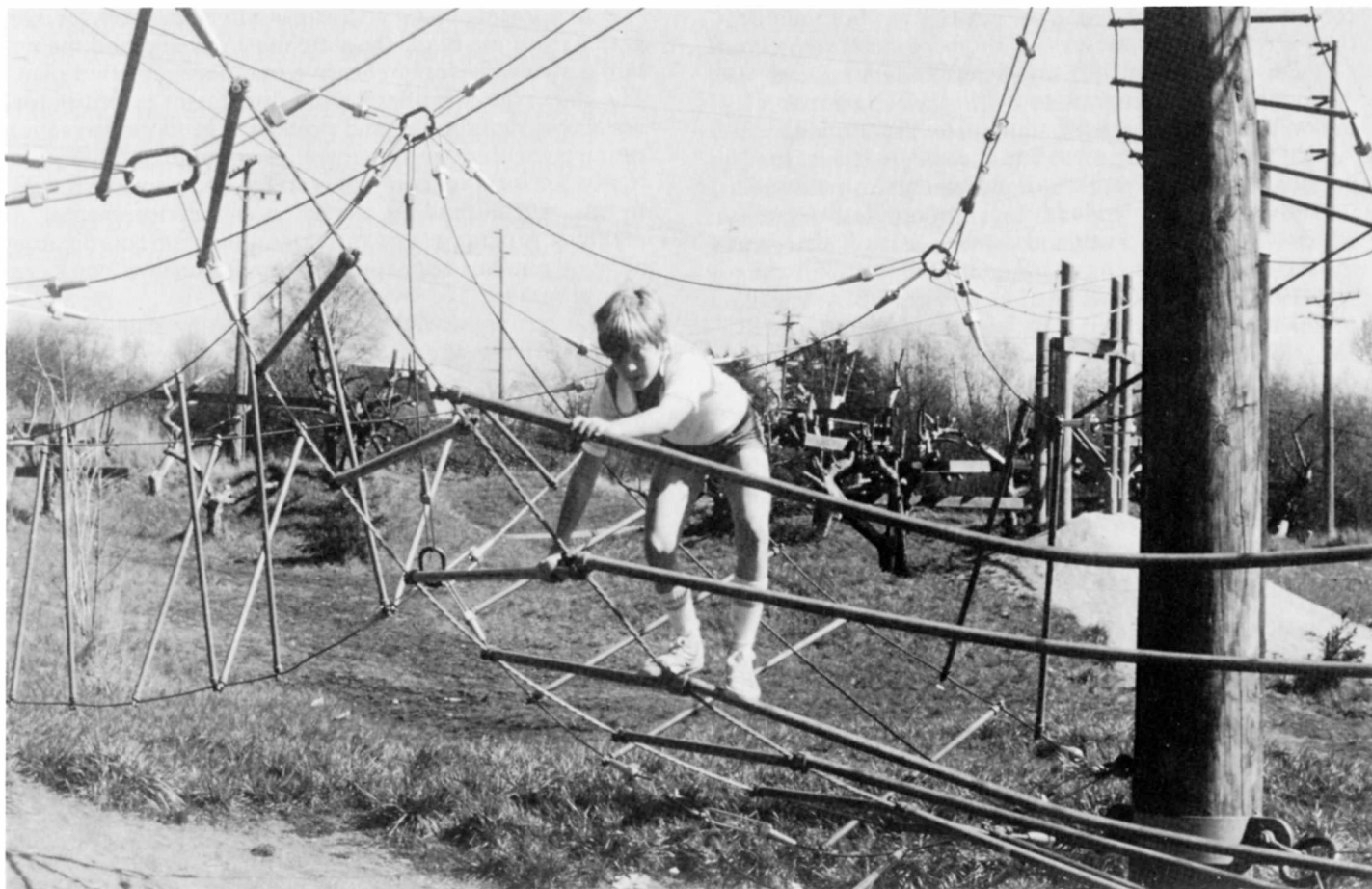


Photo: Courtesy of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

This park, funded in part by a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, is an example of recreation facilities that can be provided in rural areas.

the restoration, preservation, or enhancement of scenic beauty as seen from the highway as a landscape or roadside development project. *Copies of the brochure "Operation Wildflower, a Cooperative Roadside Wildflower Program," and detailed information on other highway improvement programs is available from the Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, DC 20590 or from state highway or transportation agencies.*

Individual and Corporate Contributions

Frequently a private individual or a business enterprise owns land and other resources of marginal personal or economic value. Federal law provides opportunities to donate, sell at less than market value, lease, or provide a long-term easement for preservation or public recreation purposes. For instance, section 2124(e) of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, as amended, allows a deduction from federal taxes for the contribution to a charitable organization or a government entity exclusively for conservation purposes of 1) a lease on, option to purchase, or easement on real property of not less than 30 years' duration; or 2) a remainder interest in real property. Conservation purposes include the preservation of land and water resources for public outdoor recreation, education, or scenic enjoyment; the preservation of historically important land areas or structures; or the protection of natural environments. Contributions of easements and remainder interests qualify for the deduction only in situations where the conservation purposes of protecting or preserving the property will in practice be carried out. These provisions are effective for contributions made after June 13, 1977. Although these provisions expire on June 14, 1981, it is increasingly likely that the law will be extended. *For more information, contact the appropriate regional office of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. For information on where these offices are located, write the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243.*

Surplus Federal Real Property

Under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended, any state, county, or other local government is eligible to apply for lands surplus to federal government needs. Frequently such property is suitable for a wide range of public park and recreation uses.

The state or local applicant must determine that the property is suitable for public recreation purposes and that, when developed, it will meet specific recreation needs. A financial plan and schedule of development for recreation use must be established and adhered to in perpetuity.

Notices of Availability of surplus real property are sent to appropriate state and local governments by HCRS and the General Services Administration (GSA). However, state or local agencies that are aware of a particular federal property that might be in excess to federal needs and that would be suitable for recreation, should check from time to time on the status of this property.

Since the inception of the surplus real property program, more than 750 properties totaling some 90,000 acres have been converted to a wide variety of recreation uses. In 1979, some 42 properties totaling over

1,700 acres with an estimated market value of over \$29.4 million were conveyed for parks, recreation, and historic monument purposes. These projects included the conversion from military use of 206 acres at Craig Air Force Base, Alabama, into boating, fishing, nature study, and other recreation uses; and conversion from military uses of more than 44 acres at Kingsley Field, Oregon, to camping, range, picnicking, nature study, and trails. Also, 16 acres of prime beachfront property in Miami Beach, Florida was transferred from the Corps of Engineers to be used for swimming, trails, picnicking, fishing, playgrounds, and tennis courts. *For more information contact: Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243.*

Technical Assistance

Cooperative Extension Service— U.S. Department of Agriculture

The Cooperative Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture was established by the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 to provide information about agricultural and engineering innovations to all citizens through an extension agent working in each county. Over the years, the role of the extension agent has broadened, and agents now work with communities in recreation planning and resource management, as well as in other traditional areas of concern. The Cooperative Extension services are financed through the cooperation of federal, state, and county governments, and therefore, serve the interests of all contributing interests. The service is widely recognized as one of the most active and effective educational institutions in rural America. *For more information, contact the State Extension Service Director of the Administrator, Cooperative Extension Service, Department of Agriculture, Administration Building, Washington, DC 20250.*

Natural Resource Inventory—Minnesota

Government and citizen planners in the upper Minnesota valley region had little information on which to base plans for natural resource preservation, land development, wildlife management, or agricultural land use and preservation. Conflicts existed over the use of land for wildlife management and agriculture. Soil capabilities, existing land uses and land cover, and wildlife habitat potential were generally unknown and thus there was no basis for rational natural resource planning decisions by citizens, development groups, and local officials.

The Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service helped the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission implement a citizen-based natural resource planning process. The process included the development of an information base to identify primary natural resource concerns, potential, and data on which to base sound decisions. An advisory group of local officials, citizens, and agency staff pinpointed specific information needs. The extension service worked with the Minnesota Land Management Information System (a computerized data storage and mapping system) to develop a data base for the commission's use. The local Soil Conservation Service (SCS) agent provided data on soil capabilities by

40-acre tracts. Where no detailed soil maps were available, the data was developed from local SCS files. Using a variety of local sources, an inventory of land use, land cover data, type and ownership of wetlands, and wildlife habitat was collected, coded, and evaluated. Most fish and wildlife lands were found to be unsuited to agriculture, allowing plans for a fivefold increase in wildlife programs for the region.

The data system and information from the inventory have provided the data base for the regional land-use plan, county land-use plans, and county SCS 5-year plans. The counties of the region are the first in the state to include a wildlife component in their land-use planning. The system is also being used to evaluate the impact of power plant sitings, transmission line routings, and possible dam locations. The data base has proven so reliable that other state agencies are now using it to develop their systems. The region is in a better position to review state and federal agency plans and programs that may impact on it. The advisory process and resulting documents have become a model for other development commissions in the state and extension service help has been requested to deal with other local natural resource problems.

Recreation Use of Abandoned Railroads

Section 809(b) of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 provides that the Interstate Commerce Commission, upon a finding that public necessity permits abandonment of rail service, must determine whether the abandoned property is suitable for other public uses, including conservation and recreation. If the commission makes such a finding, it must order that the property not be sold, leased, exchanged or otherwise disposed of except under terms set by the commission. One of these terms prohibits disposal of abandoned property for a period not to exceed 180 days "unless such properties have first been offered, upon reasonable terms, for acquisition for public purposes."

Many abandoned railroad rights-of-way have excellent potential for enhancing rural recreation opportunities. These include hiking, biking, horsebackriding and snowmobile trails, access to and linkage with other existing public park and recreation sites, and the preservation of undisturbed natural landscapes. Successful rail conversion for recreation purposes requires public watchfulness to anticipate abandonment proposals in order to acquire or otherwise protect significant rights-of-way in a timely way. *Information on specific sections of railroad rights-of-way is available from the rail planning agency in each state or the Interstate Commerce Commission, 12th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20423. Technical assistance to communities interested in conversion of railroad rights-of-way is available from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243, which administers the rails-to-trails program.*

Information Exchange

The Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service operates an information exchange to encourage the sharing of ideas about recreation services and allied subjects. Materials are contributed by "members" and "technical assistance notifications" advise potential users of the

availability of resource materials. Several publications currently available through the exchange may be especially useful in rural and small community preservation efforts. These include the "Gifts Catalog Handbook," a guide which brings the needs of particular agencies, including land and fiscal resources, to the attention of potential donors; "Land Conservation and Preservation Techniques," which explores alternatives to traditional land preservation practices, including tax incentives for gifts of land; and "Federal Income Tax Incentives for Preservation," a package of information on the Tax Reform Act of 1976 and the Revenue Act of 1978. *Single copies of these and other publications plus exchange information are available from: HCRS Information Exchange, U.S. Department of the Interior, 440 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20243.*

Information Assistance from Soil Conservation Service

The planning and development of rural recreation opportunities frequently requires an understanding of the location and characteristics of soils, water, plant, and wildlife species. For instance, soil survey information is essential in assessing and selecting land suitable for enhancing wildlife habitat, and game preserves, parks, and other recreation resources. Soil properties and limitations affect the location and construction of access roads and recreation trails, recreation structures, water supply, and waste disposal facilities. Soil properties will also be a major factor in selecting and planting trees, shrubs, and grasses for aesthetic purposes and erosion control.

SCS also provides other types of technical assistance in recreation planning; this varies with the type of project being undertaken. Assistance may include information on the potential of specific recreation enterprises, site appraisals to determine their suitability for various recreational uses, habitat improvement, and guidance on construction plans. *For more information, contact the Director for Soils, Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, PO Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013.*

Designation of Special Places

Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, as amended, recognizes that certain rivers and streams and their immediate environment possess important scenic, recreational, ecological, cultural, and similar values. The act provides a means for protecting selected rivers in a natural and free-flowing condition through the establishment of a national wild and scenic rivers system. The act established three classes of rivers: wild, scenic, and recreational. Each class has specific criteria, based largely on the extent of manmade alterations of the river and its immediate environment. In addition to protecting rivers in the national system, President Carter in 1979 directed all federal agencies to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects resulting from their activities on rivers or streams identified in a nationwide inventory of rivers as potentially eligible for inclusion in the system. HCRS conducted that inventory.

The federal government views river conservation as a shared responsibility that depends upon the combined efforts of federal, state, and local governments and the private sector. Rivers may be included in the national system through congressional designation or by application of the governor of any state to the Secretary of the Interior. Rivers nominated by the states must be protected by or pursuant to state law and are administered by state or local governments. Approximately half of the states have established state systems. *For more information, contact: Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243.*

The lower 28 miles of the Little Miami River from a point near Foster, Ohio, to its confluence with the Ohio River were included in the national system as a recreational river in 1980 by designation of the Secretary of the Interior. Previously designated a state scenic river, the national designation was requested by the governor of Ohio. A management plan has been adopted and the state will administer the river. To assure long-term protection and to enhance public recreation use, an acquisition and development plan has also been adopted.

The national designation of this portion of the Little Miami River is the first time that a river segment previously unqualified for the national system has been restored to system standards. This accomplishment vividly demonstrates an effective working relationship between Little Miami, Inc., a private citizens' organization, and federal and state governments.

The National Trails System

The national trails system includes four types of trails: recreation, scenic, historic, and connecting or side trails. Standards have been developed for each type. National recreation trails are urban oriented, and they provide a variety of outdoor recreation experiences; scenic trails are long-distance trails that provide enjoyment of significant scenic, natural, cultural, or other values of the area; historic trails provide identification and protection of historic routes and remnants and artifacts; and connecting or side trails provide points of public access to national recreation, scenic, or historic trails or provide connections between such trails. The most numerous are national recreation trails, of which 473 have been designated as of mid-June, 1980. They range in length from 0.25 mile to 200 miles, and utilize a variety of sites including abandoned railroad rights-of-way and old logging roads.

National recreation trails are designated by the Secretary of the Interior, or if located on national forest lands, by the Secretary of Agriculture. State or local governments or private organizations, which own or administer the land on which a trail is located, are responsible for applying for national designation. An on-site inspection of nominated trails is made and, if approved, the trail may be marked with the appropriate national trail symbol. National scenic and national historic trails are designated by the U.S. Congress. *Contact: Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20243.*

The National Natural Landmarks Program

The national natural landmarks program was established

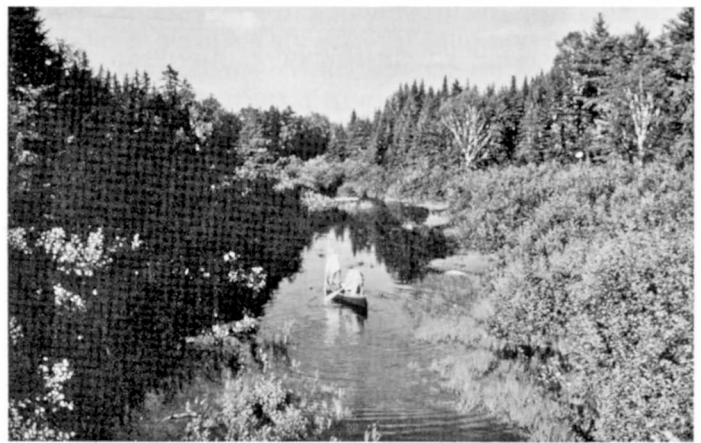


Photo: Courtesy of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

The Allagash River in Maine was designated a Wild and Scenic River by the Secretary of the Interior.

in 1963 to identify and encourage the preservation of a wide range of ecological and geological features constituting nationally significant examples of our natural heritage. Potential natural landmarks are identified through natural history studies conducted by HCRS, evaluated by eminently qualified natural resource scientists, and when considered to be nationally significant, designated as natural landmarks. The owner of a designated natural landmark is invited to adopt basic conservation practices in the use, management, and protection of the resource. If the owner chooses to make this commitment by signing an agreement with HCRS, the area is registered as a national natural landmark and the owner becomes eligible to receive a plaque and a certificate attesting to the value of the resource. *For more information, write the Division of Natural Landmarks, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, PO Box 25387, Denver Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225.*

Kramer Woods in Spencer County, Indiana, is one of the two relatively large, presettlement, lowland, mixed forest remnants left in Indiana. It is also probably one of the best remaining in the Midwest, since most lowland forests were cleared as soon as drainage made it possible to develop the agricultural potential of the region's fertile alluvial soils. Kramer Woods is exceptional because it contains great numbers of very large trees of several important species. It is the only stand of any size in Indiana dominated by Shumard's red oak, pin oak, and hickory. The 220-acre tract is privately owned, the owners have agreed to protect these forest resources, and the site is now a registered natural landmark. Although two small tracts within the landmark have been cleared for farming, the integrity of the resource has not been affected. Thus, the area is an outstanding example of the harmonious relationship that can be maintained between human activity and the identification and protection of significant natural features in a rural region.

For More Information

The Federal Office of Management and Budget annually updates a *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*, which

describes all currently authorized federal grant-in-aid programs. *The catalog is frequently available for use at local public libraries, and it may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. An order form and current price list are available from the U.S. Government Printing Office.*

The Federal Assistance Program Retrieval System (FAPRS) is an automated data system designed to identify quickly all current potential sources of federal funding available to state and local governments. FAPRS is coded to correspond with assistance programs found in the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*. Programs are arranged in 20 different categories and 175 subcategories, providing an easy search. It is updated every 3 months. Printouts of the data provide details of particular assistance programs, including their objectives, available assistance, eligibility criteria, use restrictions, current funding levels, and the contact agency and office. *To obtain access to the FAPRS system, contact your county extension agent, extension department at state land grant universities, or state planning agency.*

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Photo: Courtesy of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

This Joshua tree forest in the Mohave Valley in Arizona has been recognized as a nationally significant resource by the National Natural Landmarks Program.



Photo: Ron Hiebert. Courtesy of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Wheeler Peak is a potential national natural landmark located in the Snake Range, Nevada.

The Role of Government in Shaping the Rural Landscape

by Dallas D. Miner

Managing land resources is a partnership between private landowners and nearly all levels of government. Although most land-use decisions are still made by individuals, public interest is becoming more pervasive in shaping land-use decisions.

The direct public role has traditionally been the purview of local units of government. Using those "police powers" delegated to them by the states, local governments have long had an influence on how land is used. However, with increasing frequency, state and federal interests are becoming more active in shaping land-use determinations. The federal government has traditionally shied away from direct involvement in land-use decisions (apart from the extensive federal land holdings), although the cumulative impacts of federal programs have been substantial. Federal agencies are directly involved with many major public works projects, such as highways and other public facilities that influence land-use patterns. Grant programs for housing, economic development, community planning, and resource management also influence land uses. In addition, the regulatory functions of federal agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will play a role in land-use decisions.

States influence the tempo and style of governing local lands through public works expenditures, enabling legislation, resource protection laws, and taxation policies, and more recently through development of state-wide comprehensive land-use planning programs.

Yet, it is in communities that the public interest is most noticeable and most often injected into the decisionmaking process. This chapter focuses on local tools and experience in shaping the rural landscape, giving particular reference to emerging programs in farmland retention.

Local Land-Use Tools

The four principal tools used by communities in land-use management are acquisition, taxation, capital expenditures, and zoning. Extensive literature is available on each and no attempt is made here to exhaust all possible uses of these tools.

Acquisition is simply the authority and ability of governments to acquire land by eminent domain (for the public benefit); by full-fee purchase (often for parks, land for industrial development, and public works sites); and by less-than-fee means (easements, rights-of-way, and access rights). Although traditionally used for public projects involving construction and development, acquisition is now frequently used to protect a variety of resources such as aquifer recharge areas (wetlands) and

other sensitive environmental or hazard-prone areas. Some communities are turning to exactions from developers in the form of land dedications in return for development permits or density bonuses. In this manner, land is acquired at no direct cost to the community to meet the open-space needs of new residents. Matching funds are often available to communities through state programs or through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund administered by the Department of Interior's Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCERS).

Taxation is an important means of influencing the rate, timing, and location of community growth. The *ad valorem* property tax continues as a key source of revenue for most communities, and taxing land according to the speculative value of its "highest and best use" can stimulate converting large tracts to smaller development units. This has been particularly important in converting agricultural land into more intense uses. While land taxes are a serious problem on the one hand, many communities are now using taxation as a tool to encourage agricultural or open space uses on the other.

A major use of taxation in open-space programs is for differential assessment. At last count, 43 states had enabling legislation providing for the differential assessment of land. As a tool for retaining agricultural land, it is a mixed blessing. There is no question that it provides tax relief to farmers and others who own a disproportionately large amount of land requiring few public services. Therefore, proponents of differential assessment argue that farmers should not pay taxes at the same rate as other landowners of the community, particularly when the open space benefits of farmland are taken into account. However, a contrary argument can also be made that differential assessment programs have not successfully preserved agricultural lands over extended periods of time. At the local level, benefit also often accrues to those holding land for speculative purposes, thereby providing a temporary tax shelter for individuals but with little long-term benefit to society.

There are three major categories of differential assessment:

1. *Preferential assessment.* This is a strictly preferential approach which allows distinction to be drawn between "market" and "use" value for property tax assessment purposes.
2. *Deferred taxation.* This is the most common form of differential assessment. Under it, taxes are deferred so long as the property is held in the preferred category, but a rollback or penalty clause "recaptures" the

deferred taxes at the time of conversion. A major benefit of this approach is that it provides revenue to the community at the time it is most needed—during periods of development.

3. *Restrictive agreements.* This approach combines elements of the first two but adds to the arrangement a binding contract under which the landowner agrees to restrict the use of his property for a specified number of years with stiff pay-back penalties if premature change in use occurs. Some authorities treat easements as a separate form of restrictive agreement, although in practice they differ only slightly. One point of difference is that easements are often given in perpetuity, as in the case of scenic or conservation easements, in return for a differential assessment, while other uses of restrictive agreements take the form of a contract limited to a specified number of years, typically 5 or 10, with renewal options at the close of the period.

Differential assessment programs have proved to be but a temporary disincentive to rural land conversion, especially in areas pressured by heavy growth.

Capital improvements, particularly when linked to building permits, have become a key land-use management device. Many communities have controlled the location and timing of urban development by requiring water and sewer connections for new development. By carefully planning sewer extensions, the community can guide growth to preferred areas and inhibit it in others where development is unwanted. Location of new roads or improvements to existing transportation arteries and other public facilities can have a similar effect.

Zoning is the chief tool in the land-use management arsenal. Some examples of zoning techniques commonly used to preserve the open space or the rural character of a community are:

Large-Lot Zoning. In these, minimum acreage requirements are imposed, tending to increase unit housing costs and thus discourage single-family home development. This approach has, on occasion, been invalidated by the courts, especially in suburban areas where the effect works to exclude low-income families or minorities. In some states, however, especially in rural areas, large-lot zoning has been held valid. The result may turn on whether the area is truly agricultural, or in the path of immediate development.

Agricultural Zone. Agricultural zoning, like large-lot zoning, allows for home construction on large lots, and is normally used in general plans to distinguish a predominantly agricultural rural area from areas programmed for commercial or industrial development.

Exclusive Agriculture Zone. In these zones, construction is limited to facilities necessary to support farming. This technique has been upheld in areas where farming is clearly the dominant land use.

Clustering. Clustering allows land to be kept in agricultural use by requiring all buildings to be clustered on a specified minimum acreage of the development. To be effective, this requirement should relate building sites to soil suitability for onsite sewage disposal. The zoning ordinance should indicate the maximum number of building units per acre in addition to the clustering requirement. As an example, a developer might be required to develop at least 50 acres at a time. He might

be restricted to building on not more than 25 percent of the acreage and on land with soils suitable for onsite sewage disposal. He may be further required to dedicate the development rights of the remaining 75 percent to the town in perpetuity, thus keeping that portion of the land open for possible agricultural use.

Planned Unit Development (PUD). Similar to cluster zoning, PUD often combines zoning and subdivision regulations to blend residential and other uses with open space. This approach has potential to preserve small agricultural units. For example, the township of Plainsboro, New Jersey, recently approved a PUD containing 105 acres of farmland, which will eventually be dedicated to continued agricultural use by restrictive covenant.

Urban and Rural Service Districts. This is a somewhat newer approach with much potential. Through the planning process, areas are identified as urban or development districts in which capital facilities and/or services will be provided; property owners within the district are taxed according to a higher market value. Rural districts are also identified, based on current use, environmental criteria, value as agricultural land, and so forth, in which no capital facilities will be extended. In these areas, property owners are taxed at lower use-value rates.

Critical Areas Protection. More frequently in the last decade, new state enabling legislation has provided for the identification and protection of "critical environmental areas." Increasingly, prime agricultural lands are listed as suitable for inclusion in the definition of critical areas. Presumably, the police power would be used, much the same as with wetlands protection, in securing these areas from undue damage. This concept as it might relate to the protection of prime agricultural lands is yet untried and untested by the courts.

Community Comprehensive Plan. Although not a zoning tool *per se*, the comprehensive plan serves as guidance for future zoning amendments and other procedures. In examining zoning cases, the courts frequently look to the comprehensive plan to determine whether a given action was tied to an existing plan or whether it was an arbitrary action taken by a local authority.

Emerging Approaches to Maintaining the Rural Landscape

Few of the management tools described are alone sufficient to maintain land in a rural or open-space form. Success is being achieved, however, through a combination of tools designed to provide incentives for the rural landowner.

Agricultural Districting

Most often, agricultural districting is a companion to, or an extension of, a preferential assessment program. Two approaches to agricultural districting are emerging. One is a permissive approach whereby a group of farmers can voluntarily form a district and can apply for benefits after securing local government approval and often in compliance with a local comprehensive plan. The other form is mandatory districting whereby the state requires each applicable municipality to create an agricultural district. Although discussed in several states, no active mandatory program exists.

The two best-known examples of the voluntary districting approach are in California and New York.

California. The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, or Williamson Act, authorizes local governments to create agricultural preserves. Through the act, a contract is made with local landowners who volunteer to forfeit their development rights for a 10-year period in exchange for a use-value assessment on their lands. Each year the contract is renewed, extending the contract an additional year. Unless either party gives a notice of nonrenewal, a continuous 10-year contract remains in effect. When nonrenewal occurs, property taxes gradually increase over the remaining contract period until the market-value rate is reached. A contract may be cancelled under certain conditions, at which time the landowner pays a penalty equal to 50 percent of the new assessed property value. If the cancellation is deemed to be in the local public interest by the director of the California Resources Agency, he may grant a waiver of the penalty.

While the Williamson Act has been useful in California, there are many who feel that it is not serving its stated purpose—to preserve prime agriculture land. Critics point out that only 30 percent of the land in the program could be considered “prime,” and argue that the bulk of land in the program is not the land most vulnerable to development. This is because many farmers who own land in the urban fringe areas are simply not willing to, nor interested in, entering a binding 10-year agreement that could restrict substantial profits they might realize from property sales.

New York. In 1971, the New York Agricultural District Law was passed, encouraging farmers to preserve “land highly suitable for agricultural production and which will continue to be economically feasible for such use if real estate taxes, farm use restrictions, and speculative activities are limited to levels approximating those in commercial agricultural areas not influenced by the proximity of urban and related non-agricultural development.” The land can be preserved in districts and thereby qualify for agricultural-value assessments providing that the “farmer owns ten or more acres, used the preceeding two years for agricultural production having an annual gross sales value of \$10,000 or more.”

Agricultural districts are typically initiated by farmers themselves. They agree to form a district of 500 or more contiguous acres, complete an application form, and submit it to their county legislative body. After the county reviews it, holds at least one public hearing, and both the state and county certify it, the district can be officially protected. The district remains in effect for 8 years, when it is reviewed to determine whether it still meets requirements for an agricultural district.

The law prevents local governments from restricting farming practices (such as spreading manure) beyond the requirements of health and safety, and public agencies that wish to acquire land in an agricultural district must demonstrate that acceptable substitute sites are not available.

The law restricts public agencies from advancing money for nonfarm developments such as sewers or water supply within the district and restricts the authority of public service districts to tax farmland for services not required by farmers. Qualifying commercial farmers

can also request annual property tax assessments based on the agricultural value of their land rather than on its full-development value. In addition, the law authorizes the creation of state-initiated districts of 2,000 acres or more if it is determined “uniquely suited for the production of high value crops. . . .”

To date, approximately a million acres, or about 10 percent of the total farmland area, have been included in the New York program.

Purchase of Development Rights

The purchase of development rights is by far the most ambitious tool available to preserve the rural landscape. A number of states, beginning with New Jersey, have given serious consideration to programs designed to purchase from rural landowners their rights to its development potential. The proposed New Jersey plan illustrates this technique.

A plan for mandatory creation of agricultural districts with provisions for state purchase of development rights through the use of easements was released by the Blueprint Commission on the Future of New Jersey Agriculture in 1973. The commission recommendation called for adoption of a statewide agricultural open-space plan jointly administered by the state and local municipalities. Each municipality would be required to designate an Agricultural Open Space Preserve within its boundaries containing a minimum of 70 percent of its prime farmland (which includes Classes I, II, and III land and special cranberry, blueberry, and mucklands as defined by the Soil Conservation Service). The preserve would become part of the local government’s master plan, and only agricultural and related open-space pursuits would be allowed within it. If a municipality failed to designate its open-space land within 24 months, the state would designate it.

Landowners in the preserve could sell a development easement to their land at a time of their choosing to a state administering agency or to other purchasers. The compensation for the easement would be the difference between the land’s market value and its farm value. The landowner would have the option of selling or holding for future sale. In the latter case, he would be entitled to



Photo: Rex Lyons. Courtesy of the Department of Planning, County of Suffolk, New York.

Suffolk County (Long Island), New York, approved a \$55 million plan to purchase development rights on 12,000–15,000 acres of valuable farmland. This is the first such program in the nation.

the increase in development value that would have occurred had the preserve not been established. Financing would be through a 4 mill statewide estate transfer tax.

This plan, like others considered in several states, has never come to fruition. The most obvious reason is cost. However, one county has made the commitment to preserve the rural character of its countryside through this approach. Suffolk County (Long Island), New York, approved in 1975 a \$55 million plan to purchase development rights on 12,000–15,000 acres of valuable farmland.

Under the farmland preservation program, the first of its kind in the nation, farmland owners may sell the development rights for their acreage to the county, thus insuring that the land will be reserved in perpetuity for agricultural purposes. The dollar value of the development rights is computed by subtracting the agricultural value of the land from its potential value if subdivided for residential use, according to appraisals. Landowners voluntarily submit bids to the county which, in turn, may elect to negotiate, accept, or reject the proposals offered. In phase one of the acquisition plan, completed in the fall of 1978, some 60 bids involving 3,800 acres were accepted at a cost of \$12 million. At the start of phase two in September 1978, development rights on 11,336 acres were offered for consideration.

Under the third and final phase of the program, the county would use its power of eminent domain to acquire the development rights to farmland parcels needed to fill out the blank spaces in and around those areas, which now constitute established agricultural preserves under the development rights program. In part, phase three is designed to prevent windfall profits to owners of farm tracts who stay out of the program and who, because their property adjoins acreage reserved as permanent open space, may be able to subdivide their land into more valuable residential lots as a result of the program.

County Executive John Klein says that the power of eminent domain would be aimed exclusively at "property owned by non-farmers" and "will never be employed against a landowning farmer who continues to occupy and farm his land."

While this is the first such program, many observers feel that other counties and eventually some states facing a collapse in their agricultural industries will take the bold and obviously expensive step of purchasing development rights of important rural lands.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

The concept of transferable development rights received a great deal of attention during the mid-1970s. In principle, TDR appears to hold promise; however, practical application has been limited and fraught with administrative uncertainties.

Buckingham Township, Pennsylvania. A new zoning ordinance, passed in March 1975, includes provision for transfer of development rights for the preservation of agricultural land. Development certificates are issued to landowners in the agricultural district (AG) on the basis of one certificate per acre (one certificate per dwelling unit, roughly the density allowed under the previous zoning). Under the new zoning, the landowner in an AG may develop approximately 0.3 to 0.5 units per acre,

which must be highly clustered, or he may sell his development certificates to developers in other districts, which permit higher densities with the purchase of development certificates. When development rights are sold from AG land, it is protected under a covenant and rezoned as agricultural protection (AP). Such a designation may be changed only by a rezoning approved by the township supervisors and by a change in the comprehensive plan approved in township referendum.

Chesterfield, New Jersey. A master plan was approved in this largely agricultural township, which contained a TDR ordinance. Instead of designating preservation and development districts, the ordinance simply permitted higher densities (up to four dwelling units per acre) by clustering with TDR. Because clustering will only be possible where sewers are provided, planners are confident that future density will be concentrated in the northwest portion of the township, even without designating this as a development district. Office and industrial developers near the New Jersey Turnpike can also increase their floor area or building height by purchasing development rights. These rights may be transferred from parcels of 25 acres or larger (down to 5 acres if adjacent to a 25-acre piece) by dedication for public open space, school site, or other public use, or dedication in perpetuity for agricultural use. The developer must actually own the parcels involved, hence the transfer of credits, not the purchase of rights. The developer can sell the restricted agricultural land back to a farmer at a price reflecting its agricultural value. The ordinance permits a variety of unit types to be built on any receiving lot, as well as encouraging cluster design on the receiving lot.

Toward an Optimum Approach to Farmland Retention

Of course, there is no optimum approach to preserving agricultural lands that can be reported from current experience, or even one that can be recommended, given the fact that various measures can be tried by the different levels of government. An important point to keep in mind is that to retain the values of the countryside, planning must be done for the city. Thus, the growth management programs being developed by the various governments within metropolitan regions could have a significant impact on the future of remaining farmland. If development is directed away from agricultural areas and if adequate incentives are offered for maintenance of agricultural open space, then "urban" planning could be of substantial benefit to rural interests.

Each region of the country where farmland preservation is becoming an issue varies in terms of political climate, and the relative position that agriculture holds in terms of political influence, economic importance of industry, existing growth pressures, previously committed planning activity, available enabling legislation, and so forth. What might be politically and economically feasible in one area simply wouldn't be acceptable in another; however, there are some general guidelines that can be offered, which appear to be gaining acceptance, and which in the opinion of the author point the way toward future success.



Photo: Courtesy of the Piedmont Environmental Council.

To retain values of the countryside, planning must be done for the city. If development is directed away from agricultural areas and if adequate incentives are offered for the maintenance of agricultural open space, "urban" planning could be of substantial benefit to rural interests.

1. A decision must be made on the objective of the program: is it designed to assist the agricultural industry, or is it designed to preserve large blocks of open space?

This decision is crucial to program design. There are a variety of factors that affect the agricultural industry within an area. Taxes are but one of these factors, and a program limited to differential assessment simply won't work over time. The intergration, however, of use-value assessment with other techniques is essential, since farmers will not be able to continue farming profitably if they are forced to pay market-value taxes. Too many well-intentioned citizens eagerly support farmland retention but fail to understand that farming is a business and as such is subject to the same sorts of market pressures, input costs, labor relations, management responsibilities, and other variables as any other business within the community. "Saving" a few remaining community farms is not an answer.

The point is that to remain profitable, farming (in most of its forms) must have the "critical mass" necessary to support the industry. It would appear that the New York and California programs (and others as proposed) address this issue through the establishment of districts in which agriculture is reserved as the principal economic activity, and in which other competing forces are substantially regulated. At a minimum, this puts the program in a "critical mass" context and provides for a more positive atmosphere of permanence. In most instances, an approach such as this is best stimulated at the state level, since county-wide districting can create isolated pockets of agriculture, trapped between engulfing suburban areas and shut off from the agricultural commodity flow. A state program, however, can assist in identifying agricultural districts that blend together between jurisdictions, thereby creating larger units and a more viable industry.



Photo: Courtesy of the Piedmont Environmental Council.

Farming is a business and as such is subject to the same sorts of market pressures, input costs, labor relations, management responsibilities, and other variables as any other business within the community. "Saving" a few remaining community farms is not the answer.

As previously mentioned, farming is a significant industry when viewed from the state level, but too often in suburban counties, its economic contribution is discounted, particularly when new development and the increase in taxable value of the property it produces is measured. The creation of agricultural districts also dilutes the argument that speculators benefit from the program—that is, assuming the district program has some regulatory strength. In most district programs, the land must be in active agricultural use and must be committed to that use for long periods of time. This, of course, requires some form of contractual agreement with the farmer in return for tax concessions.

If a decision is made at the county level not to treat farming as an industry, but rather to include farmland as

a part of general open-space planning, another range of options can be viewed. In this instance, deferred taxation with stiff conversion penalties in conjunction with large-lot zoning, or agricultural zoning, may serve to meet short-term objectives. Although such programs may significantly benefit farmers who are currently farming, there is little hope that another farmer will buy the land when it is ready for sale because of the usually high market value. What may result is a series of "farmettes" (as they are called in Virginia) of 5- to 10-acre tracts. From the viewpoint of preserving open space, this may be an acceptable alternative to spending county or local money for more restrictive programs.

Finally, if county governments are interested in preserving the agricultural industry within their jurisdictions, they must actively support state-level programs designed to retain "critical mass" areas and work in partnership with neighboring jurisdictions (and, presumably the state) in identifying districts which would encompass agricultural lands within individual jurisdictions. This is not to say that an effective program limited to the individual county is not possible; it is to say that there are distinct advantages in approaching the issue from a state-level perspective.

2. The program must be equitable to farmers and other members of the community.

Few farmers, as landowners and private businessmen, will support any program that does not offer a fair return on their capital and sweat-equity investments—would anyone? Farmers view their land as their retirement package and count on the appreciation in value to provide them with sufficient income. In short, the land is the farmer's pension. To be equitable, any program must ensure the farmer will realize a fair return on his property when he leaves the land. Some states have chosen the development rights purchase approach, figuring the difference between the market value and the use value as the "development rights value" of the property, and compensate the farmer for loss or restriction of those rights. In general, farmers have supported this philosophy, if not the specific proposals in all instances. Some farmers feel that, minus the development rights, the land will never reach its full market-value potential even as farmland and therefore they may lose some potential gain, no matter how small that gain might be. However, farmers will have to make some concessions as well; they have chosen farming as a way of life and presumably reap intangible as well as monetary rewards from their profession. As long as there is a fair return at the time of sale, development rights have been fairly compensated for, and appropriate tax allowances provided during active farming years, it would seem that farmers are receiving reasonable equity.

What about the community? It must be reiterated that farms do not require (on a per acre basis) the same level of community services as do residential, commercial, or other more intensive land uses. In a real sense, the cost to the community may be measured by reduced tax revenue. But (if indeed it is a "loss" at all), it could be viewed as a rental fee for watershed protection, the maintenance of wildlife habitat, and the preservation of historical, cultural, and aesthetic values.

In some communities, farmers are contracting with local or county governments to achieve a better balance of equities between the two parties. Under the formula the farmer receives maximum tax benefit and other incentives by allowing controlled trespass rights to his property for such things as hunting and fishing, camping, or educational purposes. Farmers who deny access are given lesser tax considerations in return for the rental value of watershed protection and other open-space values. In other words, the more community residents benefit directly from the presence of the farmland, the greater the level of public-sponsored incentive for the farmer. Most farmers don't like this approach, because public access often interferes with farming practice, increases vandalism, and has other negative implications. However, if properly managed, such programs can create benefits for both farmers and their suburban neighbors.

3. There must be social equity.

Few promoters of farmland retention address the issue from a growth management perspective. It is likely, however, that the courts, if given the necessity, would do just that. The retention of large blocks of agricultural land in any county could raise the cost of housing in developed sections, could further preclude the provision of subsidized housing, and could result in a population cap. In short, it could either by intent or effect result in a situation which the courts would view unfavorably. While the courts may allow greater leeway in retaining agricultural lands than other open space because of the food production value, and hence, greater public health and welfare considerations, it is unlikely that the courts fail to challenge such concerns as exclusionary impacts. (For an in-depth analysis of this issue, see the variety of articles "Management and Control of Growth," Scott, R.; Brower, D.; and Miner, D.; eds., 3 vols. *Urban Land Institute*, 1975). Farmland preservation in the hands of strict "no-growth" advocates could jeopardize the programs and interests of others not so narrowly inclined. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe that farmland retention could not be fully integrated with balanced growth management to provide for the diverse needs of citizens.

4. There must be an active partnership between the levels of government involved.

No matter what the program, if it involves more than one unit or level of government, there must be an active partnership, particularly if public expenditures are involved. No one unit of government can expect to unduly restrict the tax-base potential of another, or expect that unit to voluntarily increase the fiscal burden of its citizens to benefit the citizens of another unit. The California plan, which provides some funding to cover local administrative burdens, is a good example of a partnership. Another might be a tax-base sharing program among local governments within a county when it can be shown that local governments within an agricultural district are requiring a disproportionate increase in per capita tax rates, compared to other municipalities, to fund (even the limited) capital requirements. On the assumption that all citizens of the county (or state, in

the case of a statewide program) benefit from the continuance of agriculture and the maintenance of farmland, then it is unreasonable to expect local governments within the restricted districts to forego the provision of minimum facilities, such as schools or road improvements, because it is unable to generate adequate income from the restricted tax base. Presumably, this would be a limited problem since the agricultural areas would require fewer services and facilities; however, in the face of double-digit inflation, it is not impossible that costs could outpace revenue with little expansion of facilities. If such inabilities emerged, they could lead to significant interruption or dilution of the program.

Concluding Observations

There are many tools available to shape the rural landscape. Those examined here are but a few of the techniques actually employed by or considered for use within the framework of state and local governments. But there are issues beyond the preservation of prime farmland, which will influence the future course of the public sector in rural land management. The most pervasive factor outside of the government realm may be the "quality of life" trend now evident in American society, which has stirred millions of people to seek an alternative to urbana and the sameness of suburbia. Related to this is the presence now of an entrenched conservation and preservation ethic among a large and growing segment of the population—whether rooted in love of old buildings, beautiful and familiar landscapes, or other aspects of the rural scene. Demographic trends ebb and flow from and within regions; however, growth in major

metropolitan areas appears to be slowing as more people seek a change in life-styles. The impacts of this trend will be widely felt in rural areas, particularly those nearest to population concentrations. Likewise, the growth in tourism and recreation will impact rural areas as more people have more time and money to enjoy the outdoors. These factors and other preferences of the American public will be the true guiding forces in shaping the future of the rural landscape. Government, although at times a significant "shaper," is more reactive to such trends as opposed to being a stimulating factor—a follower rather than a leader. It is likely that federal and state programs will become more involved in shaping the rural landscape with the passage of time. Already, bills have been introduced in the Congress to provide federal financial support for farmland preservation. Agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, EPA, and the Council of Environmental Quality have provided policy guidance to minimize the impact of their programs on prime farmland. Through other programs, such as Coastal Zone Management, federal agencies are working with states to ensure that state policies concerning farmland preservation are respected by federal counterparts.

What appears to be lacking and, indeed, what many interests are calling for is a clear national policy that provides guidance and assistance to those most directly involved with the rural landscape. Rural America is a national resource with important historic and traditional industries, cultures, values, and environments which are dynamic elements of the nation, and they deserve our best care and management.

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Chapter 11.

Vermont Act 250 as a Tool for Rural Preservation

by Chester H. Liebs

Vermont is a microcosm of many of the major issues and problems facing rural preservation, including loss of primary agricultural and forest lands, decentralization of goods and services due to regional shopping malls, and deterioration of significant historic resources and unique and fragile natural areas. The state has been a pioneer in addressing these and other complex rural environmental problems through a variety of legal means, the most notable being Act 250, Vermont's comprehensive development regulatory law.

What prompted Vermont to enact Act 250? How is the law organized and implemented? What has been its impact? Is it applicable to other places? This chapter endeavors to answer these questions about this important tool for rural preservation.

The Vermont Environment

Vermont's natural environment is varied. The heavily forested Green Mountains bisect the state, forming its north-south spine. The areas along Lake Champlain, the Connecticut River, and several other major river valleys, comprise relatively flat, fertile, agricultural lands. Contrasting environments range from the alpine, at the highest elevations, to the bogs, to the mature hardwood and coniferous forests. Although Vermont is the only New England state without frontage on the Atlantic Ocean, it does have many miles of shoreline along Lake Champlain.

The state's built environment is equally diverse. An example of almost every American architectural style, both vernacular and high-style, representing over a 200-year span, can be found within its borders. Hundreds of farm complexes, in addition to a number of large estates built by 19th- and early-20th-century industrialists and entrepreneurs, punctuate the rural landscape. The state also contains a variety of settlements including small agricultural hamlets, with a handful of buildings clustered around a general store at a crossroad; linear mill villages closely hugging the edge of a river valley to secure maximum access to water power; county seats with civic, religious, and commercial buildings often clustered around a village green; 19th-century resort villages often oriented around a great hotel; railroad towns with the station for a nucleus; and several major regional centers, with in-town residential areas surrounding a downtown commercial core.

Events Leading to Passage of Act 250

Until the 1960s Vermont experienced a much slower rate of growth than many other areas of the country. (In 1850 Vermont's population was 314,120. It did not ex-



Photo: Robert M. Vogel. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.

Vermont's natural resources also form an important economic base for the state, as exhibited by the Rock of Ages granite quarry in Graniteville, Vermont.

ceed 400,000 until the 1960s, and the 1980 population is 493,000.) A number of factors affected this lack of expansion including a severe winter climate, physical isolation, the abandonment of marginal farms for more profitable agricultural areas in the west, and the decline in traditional New England industries.

As a result of this slow growth, many of Vermont's abundant natural areas and cultural resources survived into the mid-20th century with minimal disruption or alteration. The images evoked by these resources were effectively harnessed in statewide promotional campaigns to increase tourism in the mid-20th century. Tightly clustered, white-clapboarded buildings nestled in the green hills, winding dirt roads flanked by maple trees and ancient stone walls, and covered bridges became the accepted image of Vermont.

The physical environment upon which the Vermont image was based underwent accelerated change in the 1960s. During this period, the substantial completion of the interstate highway system greatly reduced driving time from the densely populated northeast corridor to Canada. Vermont began to experience a rapid population expansion and development boom. Thousands of highly mobile urbanites with substantial discretionary incomes provided a ready market for summer homes, ski chalets, mobile home parks, and resort-related commercial activity during the escape-prone Vietnam War era. Many eventually left the cities altogether to make Vermont their permanent home. Speculators purchased



Photo: Courtesy of the Vermont Travel Division.

Hundreds of farm complexes, each one with attached buildings, dot the Vermont countryside.



Photo: Hugh H. Henry. Courtesy of the Vermont Division of Historic Sites.

Bethel is one of Vermont's linear mill villages, built along the edge of a river valley to secure maximum access to water power. Bethel has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district.



Photo: Courtney Fisher. Courtesy of the Vermont Division of Historic Sites.

The village of Windsor's downtown commercial core was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district.



Photo: Hugh H. Henry, Vermont Division of Historic Sites. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places.

Until the 1960s, Vermont experienced a much slower rate of growth than many other areas of the country. As a result, many of Vermont's abundant natural areas and cultural resources survived into the mid-20th century, and covered bridges such as this one at Woodstock became the accepted image of Vermont.

thousands of acres of land, even in the most remote areas, and hastily planned developments transformed entire regions of the state.

In an effort to regulate this expanded growth, a municipal planning and development law was passed in 1968. The law provided for the establishment of local and regional planning commissions to strengthen planning and zoning. The act attempted to provide a regional planning infrastructure in a state where there had been virtually no county government (only the courts are organized by county). Each of the state's 251 towns function individually with the next highest authority being state government. Since the impact of large-scale development extended far beyond the boundaries of any one town, a much broader development review and planning authority needed to be established. This need was further underscored by the fact that even as late as the 1960s, many rural Vermont towns did not have any form of zoning. Smaller communities were faced with having their school population doubled and miles of poorly built roads to plow in the winter as byproducts of new developments. Most smaller towns simply did not have the technical expertise to negotiate with developers nor the financial resources or municipal services to sustain large-scale development. This problem was further aggravated by lack of concern on the part of many developers for the environmental consequences of their projects. Water supplies were disrupted, delicate natural areas were disturbed, and sewage seeped from land that could not absorb domestic wastes. In addition, the fragile architectural and social fabric of existing town and city centers was eroded by investment and planning favoring their disintegration.

To counter these trends, the Vermont legislature in 1970 enacted a development regulatory law, Act 250, which set up a statewide development permit system and called for the passage, within a specified time table, of a land capability and development plan to be followed by a land-use plan, which would govern the location of all

future development in the state. The capability plan was enacted in 1973; a land-use plan has been adopted by the environmental board, but has yet to be acted upon by the legislature.

Act 250: Organization and Criteria

Act 250 was designed to foster environmentally sound public and private development, to assist rural towns in negotiating with highly sophisticated developers, to force mission-oriented state agencies to cooperate in environmental matters, to raise the quality and effectiveness of local and regional planning, and to protect existing public investments and government services.

For administrative purposes, the act divides the state into nine environmental districts, each under the jurisdiction of a District Environmental Commission consisting of three area residents appointed by the governor. All types of development regulated by the act must first receive a land-use permit from the District Environmental Commission before construction may begin. Applicants dissatisfied with a decision have recourse to a nine-member State Environmental Board or the State Superior Court. The next highest avenue for appeal is the State Supreme Court.

The following is a brief summary of the 10 criteria specified in Act 250 for assessing applications for land-use permits. Before granting a permit, the board or district commission shall find that the subdivision or development:

1. Will not result in undue water or air pollution, including impact on a) headwaters, b) waste disposal, c) water conservation, d) floodways, e) streams, f) shorelines.
2. Has sufficient water available for the reasonably foreseeable needs of the subdivision or development.
3. Will not cause an unreasonable burden on an existing water supply, if one is to be utilized.
4. Will not cause unreasonable soil erosion or reduction in the capacity of the land to hold water so that a dangerous or unhealthy condition may result.
5. Will not cause unreasonable congestion or unsafe conditions with respect to use of the highways, waterways, railways, airports and airways, and other means of transportation, existing or proposed.
6. Will not cause an unreasonable burden on the ability of a municipality to provide educational services.
7. Will not place an unreasonable burden on the ability of the local governments to provide municipal or governmental services.
8. Will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites (historic or archeological resources listed in the National or the State Register of Historic Places or established by the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as being historically significant), or rare and irreplaceable natural areas including necessary wildlife habitat and endangered species.
9. Is in conformance with a duly adopted capability and development plan, and land-use plan when adopted. In considering an application the district commission or the board shall take into consideration the following factors in relation to a proposed development: a) impact of growth, b) primary agricultural soils, c) forests and secondary agricultural soils, d) earth resources, e) extrac-

tion of earth resources, f) energy conservation, g) private utility services, h) costs of scattered development, [i] the law was enacted without i], j) public utilities, facilities, and services, k) development affecting public investments, l) rural growth areas.

10. Is in conformance with any duly adopted local or regional plan or capital program.

An application cannot be denied solely on the basis of criteria 5, 6, or 7. Act 250 requires a land-use permit for the following types of development.

1. Improvements on a tract or tracts of land of more than 10 acres, within a radius of 5 miles, for commercial or industrial purposes or on more than 1 acre if located within a municipality that has not adopted permanent zoning and subdivision bylaws.
2. Construction of housing projects such as cooperatives, condominiums, dwellings, or mobile-home parks with 10 or more units within a radius of 5 miles.
3. State or municipal improvements on 10 or more acres of land.
4. Any improvements above an elevation of 2,500 feet.
5. The subdivision of land into 10 or more lots of less than 10 acres each.

Neither construction for farming, logging, or forestry under an elevation of 2,500 feet are covered by the Act, nor are electric generation or transmission facilities, which require a certificate of public good under another statute.

Implementation of Act 250 for the Preservation of Rural Resources: Case Studies

The effectiveness of Act 250 in promoting rural preservation is demonstrated in the following case studies:

The Brookfield Massacre: State Projects Subject to Act 250 Review

In the spring of 1973, the Vermont Agency of Transportation began construction of a high-speed access road to the tiny hilltop village of Brookfield. The village, which was in the process of being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, was bisected by an unpaved, tree-lined main street that effectively kept traffic traveling slowly through the community. A leisurely and safe environment was a major factor in the village's economy—attracting visitors to the small resort and restaurant in the center of the village.

The new road altered the character of an entire valley east of the village, carved out an adjacent hillside for a borrow pit, veered right into the main street, and threatened to pour high-speed traffic through the hamlet. Former Governor Salmon, after visiting the construction site, was quoted by the news media as referring to the project as "The Brookfield Massacre." A committee of villagers asked the Division for Historic Preservation (Vermont's state preservation agency) for help.

Under Act 250, all highway projects for which public hearings had been completed by June 1, 1970, did not need to obtain a land-use permit. The division petitioned the State Environmental Board for a ruling on whether the Brookfield project required Act 250 review. At the Board's hearing, the Highway Department maintained that they had held all necessary public hearings and that the project was within the law. The division contended

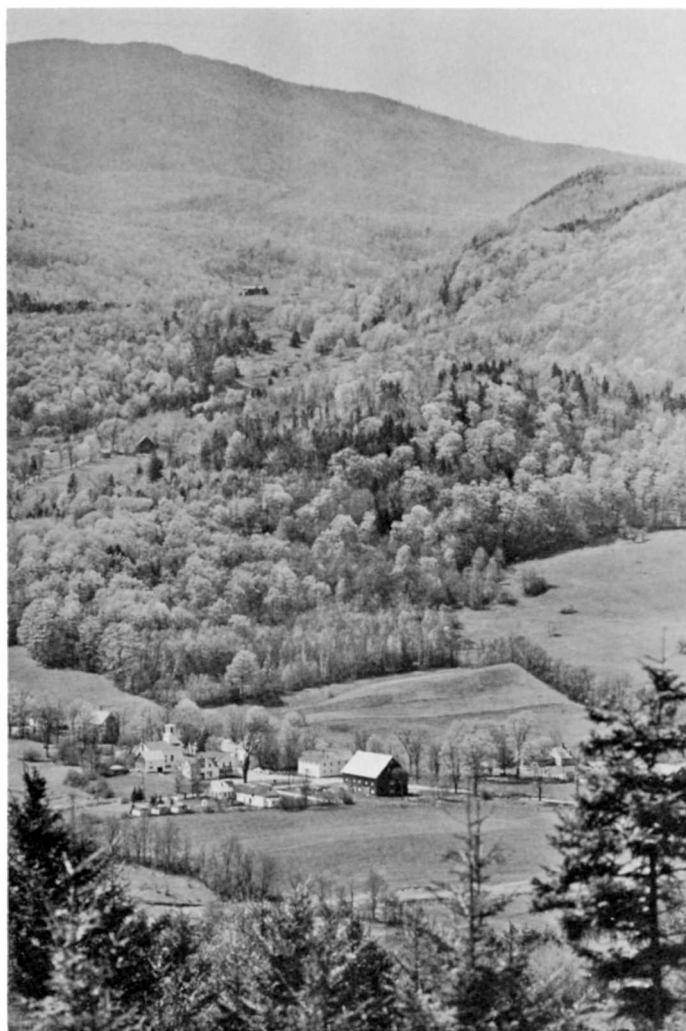


Photo: Vermont Development Department, Montpelier, Vermont. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places.

Before a permit for development can be granted, one provision of Act 250 requires a determination that the development will not have an undue adverse effect on historic sites, such as this hamlet in Plymouth, which is a historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



Photo: Chester H. Liebs. Courtesy of the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.

Pond Village in Brookfield, Vermont, the hamlet that was the site of the "Brookfield Massacre." This case reinforced the concept that Vermont's state agencies, not just private developers, were expected to perform within the guidelines of Act 250.

that the last hearing, held in the mid-1960s, was obsolete in light of the state's current priorities.

The State Environmental Board ruled that the hearings for the road were technically not properly completed by the exemption date in the "grandfather" clause (exempting state highway projects with final hearings held before June 1, 1970) and declared that the project was subject to Act 250 review.

The Brookfield case reinforced the concept that the state agencies, not just private developers, were expected to perform within the guidelines of Act 250. Perhaps most importantly, the historic preservation agency greatly increased its stature and leverage within state government.

Knight's Point Tavern: The Strict Enforcement of Land-Use Permit Stipulations

In the spring of 1977, the Vermont Department of Forests and Parks was called before the State Environmental Board for violating a land-use permit involving the Knight's Tavern in Grand Isle County.

In October 1970, the Department of Forests and Parks purchased property and buildings, including a Greek Revival tavern, built in 1845. Department of Forests and Parks officials made an application in June 1973 to the District Environmental Commission for a land-use permit for the development of Knight's Point State Park. In the proposal the Department of Forests and Parks included plans for renovating the tavern, stating that "the existing architectural style of the house will not be changed."

The District Environmental Commission, in order to comply with provisions of Act 250, which call for the protection of historic resources, requested the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation to assess the historic and architectural significance of the structure. A written report was forwarded by the Division to the District Environmental Commission, stating that the building qualified for inclusion in the State Register of Historic Places and that "maintenance of the present appearance of the structure and its existing environmental context is highly desirable." Consequently, with all parties recognizing the importance of the structure, protection of its

exterior integrity became a condition of the land-use permit for the project. The permit was issued in 1974.

Two years after this agreement, the original front doorway of the tavern (which was basically in good condition) was removed and replaced with a new door ordered from a building catalog, which was out of character with the architecture of the building. Shortly after, the wing of the structure was demolished.

Having concluded that the demolition was not in compliance with the 1973 land-use permit, the District Environmental Commission petitioned the State Environmental Board to hold a hearing to investigate the violation. At the hearing the Department of Forests and Parks had little to offer in defense of its actions. The agency had not adequately documented existing conditions, had failed to undertake a cost analysis of preservation versus demolition, and did not investigate the possibility of obtaining assistance from the state preservation agency to help maintain the historic features of the property. Nor was any attempt made to amend the land-use permit prior to demolition.

The board required the Department of Forests and Parks to reconstruct the demolished wing, and the local state attorney threatened those officials who were involved in the project with possible criminal prosecution.

The Knight's Tavern case clearly demonstrated that government agencies, as well as private developers, had to adhere strictly to stipulations set forth in land-use permits.

Hawk Mountain: Assessing the Impact of Second-Home Development on the Rural Environment

The Hawk Mountain case is typical of the comprehensive environmental cost/benefit review required of massive second-home developments by Act 250.

In January 1977 an application for a land-use permit was filed by the Hawk Mountain Corporation for the creation of a 262-lot residential subdivision on a site of over 585 acres in rural Pittsfield, Vermont (population 300). The District Environmental Commission denied the application because it failed to satisfy the following Act 250 criteria:



Photo: Chester H. Liebs.

Knight's Tavern in Grand Isle County, Vermont, (left) after illegal demolition of a wing by the Vermont Department of Forests and Parks and (right) after reconstruction of the wing, which was ordered by the State Environmental Board.



1. Water pollution. (Due to the steep slopes and shallow soils of the subdivision site, construction would have increased the turbidity in headwaters to unacceptable levels, created difficulties for domestic waste disposal, and would have altered the natural state of several streams on the site.

4. Soil erosion. The amount of soil erosion created by the project would exceed the capacity of soil-erosion-control measures proposed by the developer.

5. Transportation facilities. Traffic generated by the proposed project would necessitate substantial public road improvements, the cost of which the applicant refused to underwrite and the town could not afford.

7. Governmental services. Major public highway improvements required by the project would create an unreasonable burden on local government to provide government (in this case highway) services.

8. Scenic or natural beauty, aesthetics, and historic sites. (The intensity of the proposed development and the visibility of over 100 units from route 100 (a designated scenic highway in the *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*) would forever alter the scenic characteristics of this forest land.

9c. Forest and secondary agricultural soils. As planned, the development would reduce the potential of the land for commercial forestry.

9g. Private utility services. The town of Pittsfield has no capital program or plan to protect itself in the event that it has to assume responsibility for the project's private sewage treatment, water-supply facilities, and internal road network.

9j. Public utility services. Adequate supportive public highway facilities are not available.

9k. Development affecting public investments. The development would interfere with or jeopardize the public's use or enjoyment of several public investments including the adjacent Green Mountain Forest, the Atlantic Salmon restoration program, and scenic route 100.

10. Conformance with local and regional plans. There is no duly adopted local plan, and the project does not conform to the regional plan, which discourages residential development on the category of land in question.

New Haven Highway Case: Preserving Agricultural Buildings to Retain Agricultural Land

The New Haven Highway case resulted from a proposal by the Vermont Agency of Transportation for the reconstruction of a 2.9-mile stretch of U.S. route 7 in New Haven, Vermont. The project called for the widening of the road, necessitating the removal of a barn, in addition to the construction of a 30-foot "clear zone," at either side of the road in order to remove any obstacle which might be hit by a vehicle inadvertently leaving the highway. This "clear zone" required the removal of a substantial number of trees, three additional barns, and a store in New Haven Junction. The local District Environmental Commission objected to these features and the Vermont Agency of Transportation appealed the commission's decision to the State Environmental Board. The State Environmental Board concluded that the highway plans must be modified to include the retention of all four barns using the following justifications based on Act 250 criteria:

8. Scenic or natural beauty, aesthetics, and historic sites. Removal of the farm buildings will adversely affect the aesthetics and scenic and natural beauty of the area.

9b. Primary agricultural soils. The project will significantly reduce the agricultural potential of primary agricultural soils, 26 acres of which are in the construction area. In addition, the destruction of the barns would most likely remove the surrounding lands from farming and raise the possibility that they would be sold for development.

10. Conformance with local and regional plans. Both the local and regional plan place a high priority on the retention of agricultural uses and the preservation of natural and aesthetic resources.



Photo: Chester H. Liebs

Route 7 in New Haven Junction, Vermont. Barns slated to be removed for a 30-foot highway "clear zone" would have diminished the possibility that surrounding lands would have remained in agricultural use.

The Pyramid Case: Assessing the Broad Scale Impact of Suburban Shopping Malls

The most significant case (and the one with perhaps the greatest national interest) involving Vermont Act 250 and rural preservation came about when the Pyramid Company, an out-of-state shopping center developer, filed an application in 1977 for a land-use permit. They planned to build an enclosed regional shopping mall on a 200-acre site near an interstate highway interchange in Williston, Vermont, 6 miles from the central business district of Burlington, Vermont's largest city. The proposed mall was to house 2 department stores and 80 smaller shops, 20 restaurants, and parking for over 2,000 cars.

The proposal aroused considerable regional opposition based on widely held fears that the suburban sprawl generated by the project would engulf surrounding farmland, and that competition from the mall would decimate the still healthy business district of neighboring Burlington. The adverse economic impact of another Pyramid Mall on the central business district of Plattsburgh, New York, just across the lake, gave credence to these apprehensions. After 1½ years of exhaustive testimony, fact-finding, and deliberation, the District Environmental Commission denied Pyramid's application on the grounds that it did not meet the following Act 250 criteria:



Photo: Courtesy of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission.

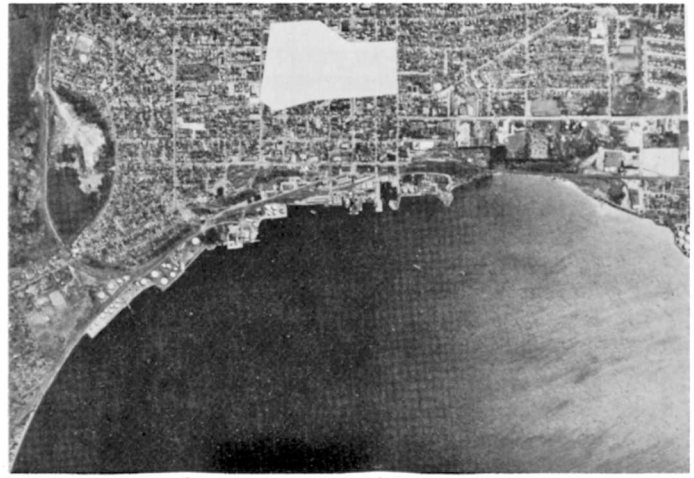


Photo: Courtesy of the Burlington Planning Commission.

The white area in the photo at left represents the land area to be consumed by the proposed Pyramid Mall on its actual location at Tafts Corners in Williston, Vermont. The white area in the photo at right is the mall site superimposed over downtown Burlington, Vermont. These illustrations point out the inefficient use of land of massive single-purpose development versus the great range of people and activities that can be accommodated within the same land area in a city. Scale for both illustrations is 1 inch equals 500 feet.

5. Highway congestion. The mall would create unreasonable highway congestion.

7. Governmental services. The mall would place an unreasonable burden on the City of Burlington to provide municipal and governmental services.

9g. Private utility service. Although the mall would rely on a privately owned central sewage treatment facility, Williston has no capital program or plan to protect the town in the event that it had to assume responsibility for the facility.

9h. Costs of scattered development. The mall is not located contiguous to any existing settlement and the additional costs of public services outweigh the tax revenue or other public benefit of the development.

9j. Public utilities, facilities, and services. The mall would place excessive demand on existing highway facilities.

9k. Effect of development on public investments. The mall would interfere with the function and efficiency of the adjacent highway network and the public's use and enjoyment of that network.

10. Conformance with local and regional plans. The mall is not in accordance with a duly adopted local or regional plan or capital program.

One of the most significant aspects of the findings centered on criteria 7, which assesses the impact of a proposed development on the ability of local government to provide municipal or governmental services. The district commission rejected the project on this criteria basing its decision on an analysis of the detrimental economic impact that the mall would have on Burlington's central business district. This analysis concluded that the resulting decline in property values would in turn create a decrease in the city's tax base and result in greatly contracted or impaired municipal services.

The Pyramid decision has been appealed to the Vermont Superior Court and is currently being considered. If denial of the permit is upheld when all appeals have been exhausted, it will set a major precedent in granting the public a right to refuse a major commercial develop-

ment, which will result in the decline of existing city centers.

The Impact of Act 250: An Observation

The overall impact of Act 250 on Vermont has been generally positive. By establishing criteria for evaluating proposed major public and private development in the state, Act 250 has raised the standard of environmental compatibility for large-scale developments, while helping to weed out developers who are unable to meet minimum environmental standards. The role of the act in encouraging environmentally sound project development is borne out by the fact that from June 1970 to December 1979, some 3,577 land-use permit applications representing over \$1.1 billion in development were submitted. The permit denial rate during this same period was an astoundingly low 2.5 percent.

In addition, the act has not been a deterrent to growth, a common fear often expressed both before and briefly following its passage. During the period 1969-1978, Vermont has experienced significant increases in population and economic development. Since Vermont has not experienced any major new natural resource discoveries, the increase in population is most likely attributable to "quality of life" factors and the general attractiveness of the state's environment—assets which Act 250 is designed to protect. Nevertheless, a comprehensive study of the economic impact of the act still needs to be undertaken.

Act 250 has also been a major force in creating widespread awareness, by local officials as well as the general public, of the actual long-term costs of proposed major developments. By mandating conformance with its goals, Act 250 has raised the level of quality and comprehensiveness of local and regional plans throughout the state.

The act is also reinforced by a number of other public policies and laws designed to foster environmentally sound future growth including:

- The development of statewide guidelines for environmentally compatible public investment;
- A graduated tax on short-term speculative land sales;
- Public ownership of several rail lines to help nourish existing industrial centers and keep future transportation options open;
- Off-premises sign control that has eliminated billboards and provides uniform signage in approved sign plazas;
- Reinstitution of the deposit bottle system, accompanied by a ban on throw-away beverage bottles, which has drastically reduced roadside litter; and
- A plan that reduces property tax on lands being used for agriculture or forestry.

A few negative aspects of the act are also becoming apparent. For example, several adjacent small-scale developments, which might individually meet Act 250 criteria, can eventually be united to form a large-scale development that does not. While the act encourages growth concentrated around existing population centers, it does not specify what form this growth will take. Moreover, the act permits suburban style site planning and architecture as an acceptable idiom for both rural and urban developments—a fact that has the potential to subject high-quality existing settlements to incompatible architecture, even though the development meets all the natural environmental and public investment criteria.

Despite these and other shortcomings, Act 250 has set an important precedent in creating a mechanism by which a variety of nonpecuniary values along with impacts on public assets must be considered before large-scale public or private development is permitted.

How Applicable Is Act 250 to the Rest of the Nation?

Vermont Act 250 evolved at a time when the nation was going through a phase of heightened environmental awareness. It also gained widespread political support because of the shock value of having an environment,

and the state's self-image, which was totally bound up in that environment, under sudden, catastrophic economic attack.

Today the passage of a similar legislation may be far more difficult or impossible, especially in areas with a less heightened sense of identity, or in those that are experiencing incremental rather than cataclysmic pressure for new development.

The current backlash against environmental regulation also works against such programs.

Nevertheless, many of the programs addressed by the authors of Act 250 more than 10 years ago may well be replicated in other states and regions across the country, not so much as the result of environmental concerns, but more as a matter of simple economic determinism. For example, future developments such as scattered residential subdivisions and isolated suburban shopping malls may become unfeasible simply because of the high price or unavailability of gasoline.

The development of Act 250 review at the state, regional, and perhaps even the national level can help minimize the impact of harmful development, promote the wise use of resources potentially subject to future scarcity, and promote patterns of settlement in rural areas that are socially, economically, and qualitatively defensible. Failure to develop such mechanisms, no matter how named, organized, or administered, will leave states, regions, and the nation as a whole ever more defenseless and vulnerable at that very time in our history when adequate planning is needed more than ever before in rural areas.

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Photo: Jane A. McLuckie, Vermont Division of Historic Sites. Courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places.

Act 250 was passed in 1970. From 1969 through 1978, Vermont experienced significant increases in population and economic development. Since Vermont has not experienced any major new natural resource discoveries, the increase in population is most likely attributable to "quality-of-life factors" and the general attractiveness of the state's environment—assets that Act 250 is designed to protect.

Chapter 12.

Private Rural Conservation Efforts

by Joe Getty, Douglas Horne, Samuel N. Stokes, and
A. Elizabeth Watson

Rural conservation is the protection of the countryside, including the preservation of buildings and villages of cultural significance, the protection of the surrounding open space, and the enhancement of the local economy and social institutions. A functional and harmonious relationship exists between a rural area's buildings and villages and their surrounding open space because the setting, types, and design of rural developments were heavily influenced by topography, climate, and indigenous building materials. To preserve this relationship, rural conservationists must concern themselves with the protection of such open spaces as farmlands, forests, wetlands, and wilderness areas. The interdisciplinary nature of rural conservation requires careful attention to local agricultural, economic, environmental, historical, political, and social factors as well. The ultimate effectiveness of rural conservation, as with any planning, preservation, or conservation effort, depends heavily on the support of those whose property institutions and livelihood are affected.

In the United States, historic preservation and open-space protection traditionally have been regarded as separate issues. National, state, and local government agencies and private nonprofit organizations usually have dealt with one or the other issue, but not with both. Today the mutual dependence of the two is beginning to be understood, as exemplified by the federal government's creation in 1978 of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service within the Department of the Interior, which combines federal programs for historic preservation, outdoor recreation, and natural areas protection. A few national and local private nonprofit organizations are also concerned with both issues.

Interestingly, England and other European countries long ago recognized the common goals of historic preservation and open-space protection and organized their conservation efforts accordingly.

The Role of Private Organizations

Private nonprofit organizations at both the national and local level play an essential role in protecting America's rural areas. They are particularly suited to carry out the following types of activities:

- **Education.** Independent private organizations will often be more credible than government agencies in educating citizens about the need to protect particular communities or rural areas throughout the nation.
- **Citizen participation.** Membership organizations provide opportunities for citizens to become part of larger organized efforts to protect rural areas and to volunteer time to help achieve the organizations' goals.

- **Lobbying.** Broad-based citizen organizations can be very effective in lobbying for local, state, and national legislation to protect rural areas.
- **Property Acquisition.** Private organizations can often acquire property with more flexibility, greater speed, and at lower cost than government. Since an organization will seldom have the necessary funds to acquire all the property that should be protected in a given area, an acquisition program should be based on an identification of key parcels. Acquisition may sometimes be followed with resale to government for parks or wildlife refuges, or to private purchasers whose use of the property may be restricted to achieve protection.

National Private Organizations

Nationally, there are many organizations concerned with the protection of natural areas. Some of these are primarily concerned with lobbying, litigation, and public education, such as the Environmental Defense Fund, Friends of the Earth, the National Audubon Society, the National Wildlife Federation, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Sierra Club, and the Wilderness Society. Several others, including the Conservation Foundation and Resources for the Future, are primarily oriented toward research and publication. On the other hand, the Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land are the two national private organizations noted principally for the acquisition of land.

The Nature Conservancy, through local chapters and professionally staffed regional and state offices, works to protect natural areas of ecological importance. The conservancy has acquired gifts of land in fee simple, easements, and other partial interests in land, sometimes for later transfer to local, state, or federal agencies. The Trust for Public Land offers advice on land conservation techniques, including land trusts. The Trust for Public Land does not hold land, although it does acquire it for conveyance to public agencies. Much of its work has been oriented towards protecting urban open space, but it has begun recently to address rural land conservation concerns, especially the preservation of agricultural land in the West.

As might be expected, most private national environmental organizations have concentrated their efforts on wilderness and other natural areas as opposed to rural areas where man has had an impact on the land, such as agricultural areas. Yet most rural areas fall between wilderness at one extreme and the city at the other, and constitute the great bulk of all of the real estate of this nation. A few of these organizations, however, including



Photo: Dave Bohn. Courtesy of the Nature Conservancy.

Since its founding in 1951, the Nature Conservancy has protected 1.6 million acres of land involving more than 1,300 sanctuaries. The conservancy recently completed the \$2.5 million acquisition of Santa Cruz Island, California, which contains over 300 known Chumash Indian sites.

the American Land Forum, the Conservation Foundation, the Sierra Club, and the Trust for Public Land, have begun to focus attention on the need to protect farmland.

In addition to the organizations just cited, there are many other national organizations concerned with protecting rural areas. Organizations concerned with agriculture, such as the National Association of Conservation Districts, are becoming increasingly concerned with the loss of prime agricultural lands to soil erosion and urban conversion. Others focus on specific issues, such as the American Rivers Conservation Council, which works to protect wild and scenic rivers, and the Public Lands Institute, which advocates wise management of public lands and resources. In addition, national organizations that represent hunters and fishermen will often support rural conservation efforts, realizing that their members' interests are best served by protecting the

breeding grounds and other habitats of the species they wish to hunt and fish.

As for national historic preservation organizations, there are several with specialized interests, but the National Trust for Historic Preservation is the only one with a comprehensive historic preservation program. Through its six regional offices, the National Trust disseminates preservation information and assistance to local organizations, agencies, and individuals. This work has always included the protection of rural resources and to some extent open spaces. However, in 1979, the National Trust established a Rural Project in its Mid-Atlantic Regional Office to focus attention on the special problems of rural areas, as distinct from urban ones.

This comprehensive program not only helps communities preserve their buildings and villages of architectural significance, but also helps them protect farmland,



Photo: Dave Bohn. Courtesy of the Nature Conservancy.
Santa Cruz Island, California.

natural areas, the local economy, and social institutions, in an effort to improve the quality of rural living. The Rural Project approaches these objectives by providing direct assistance through locally sponsored programs in several communities within the Mid-Atlantic region. The results of these efforts will be publicized through reports, workshops, and other media so that rural communities throughout the nation can learn from these examples.

The existence of numerous organizations involved in work on so many of the issues related to the broad goal of rural conservation offers a substantial framework for the development of cooperative efforts to protect America's rural areas. This is so despite the fact that these organizations have rightly concluded that they must specialize in order to survive in an era of tight funding for private nonprofit organizations. This specialization, however, produces constraints on the availability of technical assistance at the national level for local organizations concerned with rural conservation. Thus while we have given a brief overview of national organizations that can contribute to rural conservation efforts, this article is weighted toward the illustration of techniques and activities that can be implemented locally. Ultimately, that is where the work must be done, both through private organizations, such as the ones discussed in the following section, and through local units of government.

Local Private Organizations

There is a great diversity in the scope and nature of local private rural conservation efforts. In many instances, the most effective projects result from the collaboration between private nonprofit organizations and local government. In other cases, private organizations have provided needed assistance on conservation issues where voids have existed in local governmental programs. Because of their inherent flexibility, private groups can

design programs that address specific situations within the community.

The following examples illustrate some of the diverse and imaginative approaches possible for local private organizations working toward rural conservation. Each case illustrates a different area of emphasis or application, but they all share a prevailing concern for protecting rural resources. No one of these organizations should be taken as a "model" for other private groups to imitate. Programs in each area should depend entirely on local circumstances and should respect existing private and governmental efforts.

The Brandywine River Museum and Conservancy

The Brandywine Conservancy's activities closely resemble those of other environmental organizations, but with an important addition: it recognizes the value of historic preservation as an element of environmental protection. Also, the Brandywine Conservancy demonstrates the usefulness of aggregating various *ad hoc* groups to capitalize on the different interests and concerns of local activists, and in providing philanthropists with multiple opportunities to develop their abilities and ideas.

The Brandywine Conservancy had its beginning in the late 1960s with several groups that opposed environmental threats to the region around Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. Among these threats were a large power transmission line, three limited-access highways, an international airport, and the prospect of industrial zoning for land along the Brandywine River in the heart of the community. Another, more general impetus was the need to preserve the river's water quality, since it is an important water source for the entire region. One of the groups formed at that time purchased two tracts threatened with industrial development, a meadow called "the commons" and a three-story brick mill. Shortly thereafter, this group created the Tri-County Conservancy of the Brandywine (since renamed the Brandywine Conservancy) and donated these properties to the new organization.

The different interests of the individuals involved in the conservancy's early history are evident in the conservancy's activities today, generated by two separate components within the same organization. One is the museum, housed in the converted mill, which demonstrates its concerns about the natural environment by exhibiting the works of artists influenced by the Brandywine countryside (among them Andrew Wyeth), by using native plants in its landscaping, and by maintaining nature trails along the river. At the same time, the conservancy's Environmental Management Center (EMC) pursues an entirely different course of environmental education, by working with 34 township governments, 7 conservation organizations, and 3 county governments (Chester and Delaware counties in Pennsylvania, and New Castle County in Delaware) to assist them in developing programs and ordinances in accord with its conservation goals. In advocating wise private and public land-use planning, it focuses on preserving the water quality and environment of the Brandywine River, whose watershed is experiencing development pressure generated by both Philadelphia and Wilmington.

An important activity within the EMC is its Stewardship Program, which in 1977 was given a 3-year grant from a private foundation to expand its land protection

efforts. It is staffed by one professional, who assists private landowners in preparing management plans for their property. The program thus far has protected more than 3,400 acres of sensitive environmental areas, primarily through voluntary easements. By the end of 1979, the conservancy held 60 of these easements, protecting a total of 1,981 acres. It has assisted two other private conservation organizations, the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust and the Chester County Open Lands Conservancy, in acquiring seven easements protecting an additional 860 acres.

The EMC also has conducted historic resource surveys and assisted townships in developing historic district ordinances; a few of its easements also apply to historic buildings. One of the rural districts it has helped establish is the Birmingham Historic District, which protects the character of a 250-year-old road still in use today. The route was that along which the British Army advanced to the Battle of Brandywine during the Revolutionary War. As an aid in reaching local governments, the EMC publishes a subscription-format handbook on environmental management, and subscribers are invited to attend workshops and seminars on various local environmental topics. The conservancy also publishes a newsletter on both museum and EMC activities for its general members.

The Brandywine Conservancy demonstrates the usefulness of aggregating various *ad hoc* groups to capitalize on the different interests and concerns of local activists, and in providing philanthropists with multiple opportunities to develop their abilities and ideas.

The Maine Coast Heritage Trust

The Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) is an example of an organization operating throughout a large geographical region that has made effective use of a single conservation tool, the easement program. It is an unusual organization in two respects: first, it is a nonmembership organization founded and supported by wealthy and public-spirited individuals; second, it relies on other organizations and agencies to accept the easements it negotiates.

Although the MCHT charter authorizes the organization to acquire property and easements, it has avoided acquisition because it assumes that it will someday disband. Instead, it negotiates easements on behalf of other recipients, including local governments, state agencies, and national conservation organizations. It has brokered 166 easements, more than most organizations have managed to acquire, reflecting its 10 years of professional commitment to and concentration on its easement program. These easements protect more than 12,000 acres, with protected properties ranging in size from 0.25 acre to 2,500 acres. More than half of these easements have been transferred to Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island, many of them protecting its dramatic views of Frenchman's Bay and Blue Hill Bay.

Recognizing the importance of education efforts in the ultimate success of its programs, the MCHT distributes several publications. Recently it joined with the Critical Areas Program of the Maine State Planning Office to publish a brochure on land conservation techniques for property owners, *The Landowner's Options: A Guide to the Voluntary Protection of Land in Maine*; financial



Photo: Courtesy of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

A conservation easement held by Acadia National Park, Maine, prevents development of this small island.

assistance for this publication came from the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. It has published a series of case studies on various land conservation techniques used by local groups and government entities, and it publishes a newsletter, *Coastal Notes*. In connection with its educational efforts, MCHT has worked in a modest way with local jurisdictions on open-space planning. It has sponsored seminars on easements and other land conservation techniques for local government officials and has worked with local tax assessors to promote their understanding of easements.

The Waterford Foundation

Established in the 18th century, Waterford, Virginia, is a small rural village. Because of its historic significance, it was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1970. Long before this official recognition, however, preservation efforts led by the Waterford Foundation were underway. During the 1930s the building restoration efforts of two brothers stimulated the interest of several long-established families in the cultural and architectural heritage of the village. In 1943 these families formed the Waterford Foundation to promote interest in preserving more of the village's buildings and to encourage the viability of traditional crafts in the area. Several years later, the foundation was opened to general membership.

Almost from the beginning, the foundation has promoted its goals by conducting a fair consisting of a homes tour and crafts exhibit. Today this event is enormously popular, and its proceeds have enabled the foundation to acquire buildings and vacant land in and around Waterford to provide space for exhibits and parking.

With its emphasis on architecture, its acquisition of property, and the nature of its fund raising, the Waterford Foundation is similar to urban historic preservation organizations; like them, it has been successful in encouraging private preservation, so that the village has become a highly desirable place to live. On the heels of this preservation, however, has come a dramatic rise in the price of the homes and heightened interest in developing the surrounding open space. The pressure to develop the

region around Waterford emanates from Washington, D.C., which is approximately an hour's drive away.

In 1972 the foundation began an easement program, in an attempt to obtain voluntary cooperation in preserving the village and its open spaces. The open spaces include the visual setting of the village—a square mile included in the National Historic Landmark designation, and land along 2 miles of Virginia route 662, the main route into the village. From the beginning, the foundation determined that it did not wish to hold easements. Because it is run almost entirely by volunteers, it did not feel that it had the administrative resources or the expertise necessary to oversee the easements. Therefore, the foundation asked the Virginia Historic Landmarks Foundation, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to accept easements in Waterford; all agreed because of Waterford's nationally recognized quality.

The foundation's primary role has been to provide assistance in the early stages of easement negotiations with individual property owners, and has placed easements on its own properties. To date, the foundation has brokered 42 easements on some 200 acres of land and 36 town lots—roughly 50 percent of the village. Many of these easements were negotiated during 1975, when the foundation received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to hire a consultant to assist in refining the easement program.

Besides promoting private action for preservation, encouraging official recognition of the village by state and national programs, and inaugurating an easement program, the foundation has sought to protect Waterford by having it designated as a historic district under a county ordinance adopted in 1972. When part of the village was threatened with flooding from an impoundment proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers for Catoctin Creek, a small stream winding along one edge of the village, the foundation supported efforts to designate the Catoctin as one of Virginia's scenic streams, a designation it received in 1976. And when the possibility of installing a community sewer system materialized in 1972, only 2 years following Waterford's designation as a National Historic Landmark, the foundation supported efforts to mitigate the system's impact by insisting on review by the the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

However, the foundation has not yet solved what it considers its most pressing problem: the threat that much of the surrounding open space will be developed. Its easement program has not been entirely satisfactory in this regard, although there is some hope of achieving more protection as owners who have been so far reluctant to donate easements become more comfortable with the idea, and as new owners who purchase unprotected property begin to participate in the program. Much of the surrounding agricultural land was recently designated as an agricultural district by the county—a voluntary program in which the foundation enrolled its small acreage—and the county government is seeking other ways to control and direct its growth to other, more acceptable areas. Nothing yet attempted by the foundation, however, offers the guarantee it seeks of permanent release from the threat of adverse impacts from development.



Photo: Samuel N. Stokes. Courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The Waterford Foundation has brokered 42 easements on 200 acres of land and 36 town lots—about 50 percent of the village of Waterford, Virginia, which is shown here.

The Rural Land Foundation (Lincoln, Massachusetts)

In many rural areas, land subdivision and development is perceived as a threat to the character of rural communities. In response to this threat, land trusts have emerged in recent years as an alternative to traditional community conservation and planning efforts. Under this approach, the land development process is used to generate funds for land preservation—thus, the problem becomes part of the solution.

Lincoln is located 15 miles from Boston. Probably best categorized as a rural suburb, the community has a long history of concern for its natural and cultural resources. Local citizens formed the Rural Land Foundation in 1966 to purchase and protect the historic 109-acre Wheeler Farm from intensive development. It was organized as a nonprofit conservation trust, rather than as a profit-making entity, to avoid conflict and controversy over its conservation objectives. Eight Lincoln residents were appointed as trustees and were empowered to buy and sell land for conservation purposes. An earlier organization, the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, created in 1958 to solicit and hold gifts of land, cooperates closely with the foundation. Working in tandem, the two organizations have undertaken several open-space projects that demonstrate their complementary roles.

When the Wheeler Farm came on the market in 1966, the asking price was \$305,000. The farm itself consisted of open rolling fields and wooded slopes, and included two colonial houses. The farm has been in Wheeler family ownership for 200 years. Through the property ran an old colonial road which had been used to transport British war dead to the Lincoln burying ground at the beginning of the American Revolution. Although developers had sought to purchase the property to construct a 40-unit housing subdivision, the Wheelers, out of concern for their land, were willing to listen to local conservationists who presented alternative development strategies.

The foundation set out to develop a financing structure to assure themselves and the Wheelers of financial success of the project. The key element was the willingness of the State Street Bank and Trust Company to make loans to the foundation, based on separate \$10,000

guarantees from 30 public-spirited citizens. With ample credit from a combination of bank loans and mortgages on the two houses, the foundation offered the Wheelers \$285,000 for the property. The Wheelers agreed to sell at that price, making it clear that they supported the development plan that the foundation had generated.

The development plan itself was crucial in implementing the land trust concept. To prepare the plan, the foundation retained the services of a local landscape ar-



Photo: Courtesy of Richard A. Lemire, Lincoln, Massachusetts.

Old fields on the Wheeler Farm, which is now restored, are part of the 58 acres permanently protected by the Rural Land Foundation.

chitect who conceived a site plan that permitted appropriate development while protecting the visual amenity of the property. After a number of revisions, the final plan provided for nine house lots ranging in size from 2 to 7 acres, and a lot for each existing house; a 1,700-foot curved road was designed, provision was made to bury

all utilities, and a total of 56 acres (including most open fields and the old colonial road) were designated as permanent open space.

The lots were priced from \$25,000 to \$45,000 according to their size and quality. The lots sold quite readily, and after both houses and eight lots had been sold, the foundation had made a profit of \$40,000. Rather than sell the last remaining lot, the 2-acre tract was added to the 56-acre parcel as permanent open space, and all 58 acres were then deeded to the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust for protection in perpetuity.

The Lincoln experience has demonstrated that once the structure of a land trust is in place, it can continue to serve a useful purpose as need arises. After completing the Wheeler Farm project, the foundation became involved in several related projects. One effort was to secure the passage of an innovative local zoning amendment providing for both low- and moderate-income housing and for open-space protection. In another project the foundation negotiated with selected developers to provide needed commercial buildings on a site the foundation owned, thereby providing the foundation with an annual income. All of these projects were in conformity with local planning objectives.

Although these projects were implemented with a minimum of local capital outlay, they have required a continuing, though modest, output of collective effort. The town of Lincoln has been fortunate to have this effort carried out by a group of unusually talented volunteers. The land trust program has succeeded in Lincoln primarily because of the spirit of active cooperation between local public agencies and private organizations, and it will doubtless continue as an essential component of the local effort to shape and protect the Lincoln landscape.

The Piedmont Environmental Council

Founded in 1972, the Piedmont Environmental Council

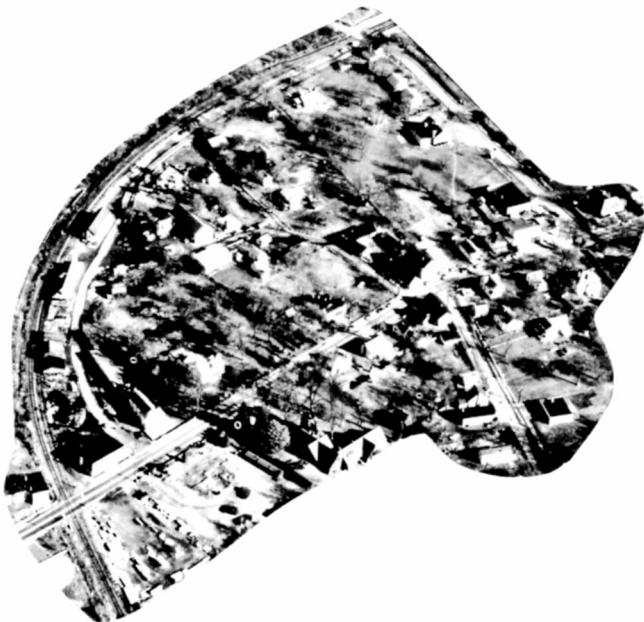


Photo: Air Photographics, Inc., Purcellville, Virginia. Courtesy of the Piedmont Environmental Council.

The community of The Plains, Virginia, 45 miles west of Washington, D.C., is one of several small Piedmont towns for which the Piedmont Environmental Council has undertaken townscape design and planning studies. The photograph at left shows the town as it appears today; the design sketch (above right), derived from the community goals elicited through a series of town meetings, depicts the accommodation, through infill development, of expected growth over the next two decades.

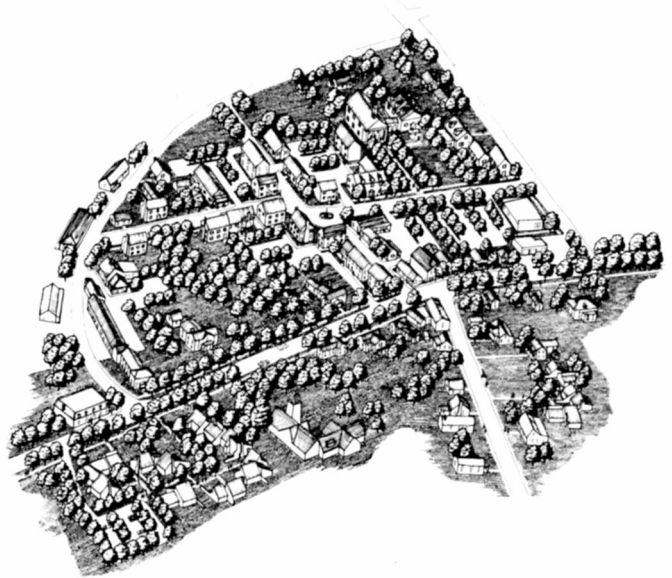


Photo: Courtesy of the Piedmont Environmental Council.

(PEC) is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to protecting the rural character of a nine-county region in central and northern Virginia. It is governed by a board of directors representing each of the counties and maintains an office with a staff of planners and landscape architects in Warrenton, Virginia.

The impetus to form the PEC came when a group of local officials, prominent citizens, and media representatives traveled to Great Britain to study the British system of land-use controls. Convinced that the principles of design and conservation used in Great Britain could be successfully applied within the American planning system, the group formed PEC as a private corporation to undertake research, planning, and design activities, including land-use planning and zoning, farmland retention, visual analysis, central business district revitalization, and open-space and resource protection.

As a private organization, the PEC uses conferences, workshops, and other educational activities to advocate conservation of the unique resources of the region. It also offers assistance to local planning agencies in special problem areas, and provides direct assistance to citizens concerned about the effects of local land-use policies, helping to ensure that citizens are involved in local planning. The range of its activities is presented in the PEC publication *Environmental Conservation: A Citizens' Sourcebook*, which presents case studies of planning projects undertaken by PEC during its first few years. Included are county and regional environmental resource and visual analysis, townscape studies, and site plan design criteria. Amply illustrated and providing accounts of the issues and needs in the region, it is an important educational document for PEC.

Another publication prepared by PEC is its *Main Street Manual*, which discusses the need for good design in facade renovation and downtown revitalization projects. Its goal is to promote healthy central business districts by reducing the potential for strip development that encroaches on the rural outskirts of the towns in its region. Other PEC educational activities include a series of slide/tape presentations on various planning and design issues, and the monthly *PEC Newsreporter*, which keeps members informed on events occurring in the region and provides highlights of environmental activities at the state and national level.

Sugarloaf Regional Trails, Inc.

Sugarloaf Regional Trails, Inc. (SRT), is a nonprofit planning organization founded in 1974. It encourages the protection of a major natural landmark, Sugarloaf Mountain, and the unique environmental and cultural heritage of northern Montgomery County, Maryland, which lies in the path of spreading urbanization from metropolitan Washington, D.C.

SRT is not a membership organization, although it has close ties to local citizen associations and relies heavily on volunteer support. As its planning program has developed, SRT has undertaken county-wide studies on historic preservation, open-space planning, and related issues. It has obtained assistance for these efforts through state and federal grants and has worked under contract to regional and county planning agencies.

The early activities of SRT centered on developing a greater public awareness of historic preservation and environmental issues through educational programs, conferences, field trips, and recreational activities. Its staff

of three professionals developed theme trails for walking, bicycling, train riding, and canoeing, with themes on agriculture, architecture, crafts, history, and natural areas. Brochures describing these trails are distributed to the public to heighten community concern for its natural and cultural resources.

One of its major efforts has been to inventory the history and architecture of a rural countryside. As a result, SRT played a primary role in preparing the recent "Master Plan and Ordinance for Historic Preservation in Montgomery County, Maryland," serving as a consultant to the Montgomery County Advisory Committee for Historic Sites (formed by the county planning board). The plan was approved by the county and now forms the basis of its comprehensive historic preservation planning program.

Other planning studies have dealt with broader landscape and environmental issues in the region. "Environmental, Social and Cultural Aspects of Farmland Retention" examines the noneconomic factors involved in agricultural preservation, urging enactment of a comprehensive farmland retention program for the county and suggesting possible county policies. "Scenic Byways—A Study of Scenic Roads in Western Montgomery County" proposes a county-wide comprehensive scenic roads program, including a methodology for scenic roads evaluation and a case study of the roads in the western part of the county. As such, the study provides a model for other areas that may be developing scenic roads designation and protection programs.

Conclusions

Private organizations take many diverse approaches to rural conservation and cover a remarkably broad spectrum of conservation issues. Some groups have been formed to fill voids in local public protection efforts, and others are oriented toward national issues. Some groups focus on a single issue, while others treat a whole series of related concerns.

These case studies have shown that public conservation programs in rural areas can be particularly effective when carried out in partnership with private, nonprofit organizations. Such organizations provide a vehicle for bringing together citizens with a wide variety of interests in areas such as land-use, cultural protection, and economic issues, who can contribute to rural conservation programs. Private, nonprofit organizations also offer the following advantages as well:

- A local organization can carry out important public education activities.
- In rural areas there is often a shortage of citizens with sufficient time for volunteer activities. An organization allows members to pool what time they do have to meet common objectives. For example, it can divide among its members the tasks involved in monitoring proposed land use changes and governmental actions.
- An organization can stimulate citizens to work continuously on projects rather than waiting until a crisis arrives and the chances for favorable results are reduced.
- A local organization involving many members constitutes an important political force. Consequently, local officials and politicians are more likely to listen to them than they are to the individual citizen.

The future of private rural conservation organizations is largely dependent upon our national economy. These groups rely on contributions of funds, property, and work from those who can afford to give. Moreover, many private conservation and preservation efforts have been founded by wealthy individuals willing to take risks and to experiment with innovative techniques—risks that less well-to-do people cannot usually justify or support, particularly when their own properties may

be involved. But many valuable lessons have been learned through the innovative efforts of private organizations, notwithstanding that the protection of wealth and property was an important motive. The challenge for private organizations is to develop conservation programs and techniques that address the needs and capabilities of people from all income levels so that threats to our rural areas can be met wherever they arise.

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Douglas Horne is coordinator of the Rural Project for the National Trust. Prior to this Mr. Horne was a principal in a Vermont firm specializing in planning and landscape architecture. He has worked with rural communities in northern New England on land-use planning and environmental protection issues and has authored several publications on these topics.

Samuel N. Stokes, director of the National Trust's Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, designed and initiated the Rural Project. He has worked for the Smithsonian Institution's Office of International and Environmental Programs and the Peace Corps, as a volunteer and a country director. He is co-author with Joe Getty of "Rural Conservation" of the National Trust's information series.

A. Elizabeth Watson, a field representative for the Rural Project, is the author of "Establishing an Easement Program to Protect Historic, Scenic and Natural Resources" of the National Trust's information series. She has worked with the *Preservation Press* on a forthcoming historic preservation reference publication, on portions related to preservation planning and law, local preservation efforts, and other preservation topics.

Suggested Reading

The National Trust for Historic Preservation. "Rural Conservation." Information Sheet Number 19. Single copies are available from the National Trust regional and field offices (see following list). Bulk copies at \$.50. Each may be ordered from the Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036. When ordering from the Preservation Press, please add \$1.50 for postage and handling. Residents of California, Massachusetts, New York, and South Carolina should add the applicable sales tax. Payment must accompany all orders. Trust members receive a 10% discount on publications prior to the addition of postage and handling charges.

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Chapter 13.

New Directions in Landscape Conservation and Informal Recreation in Britain

by R.J.S. Hookway

The Changing Environment

The natural environment in Britain¹ is limited to the rocky coastlines, the tide-swept estuaries, and the tops of our small mountains. Everywhere else the actions of man, in clearance and draining, in cultivation or grazing, in building or pulling down, in peace or war, have fashioned the countryside.

Some are the actions of ages long past, and valued both as part of our cultural heritage or for the habitats or scenes that have evolved. At the present end of a long-time spectrum are the actions of this generation of landowners, farmers, builders, and engineers. These can be the subject of much heated argument with conservationists. The motivations of the present users of rural land are much as in the past: to grow more food and timber, quarry and mine minerals, build houses and places for trade, and provide roads for access. But the modern tools are very different. Single pieces of mechanically powered equipment can replace the labour of hundreds of men. Features that have been a part of the scene for a thousand years can be cleared in a day. Fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides can affect changes beyond the understanding of previous generations.² In other ways, too, the pace of change since the World War has been more rapid than ever. There are more owner-occupiers, farmers, farm buildings are bigger, fields are bigger, and cropping systems have changed. Yet the remaining heritage, a possession of inestimable value, is much loved; by country dwellers, by the millions who visit it from the huge towns and cities of this densely populated, industrial, and commercial country, and by ever-increasing numbers of visitors from other countries. With 50 million inhabitants, Britain, which has the same area as Florida, is a crowded country. Despite the efficiency of its farming, the countryside produces only a little over half the food and less than a tenth of the timber the nation needs. The pressures and actions to produce more food, more timber, more minerals, more land for development and transport, and more water from our diminishing acres and for our increasing population, have resulted in counter pressures and reactions from landscape and wildlife conservationists and from those seeking to use the countryside for informal recreation.

It is a formidable challenge to try to identify those "new directions" in rural conservation, which might be of interest in the states, especially considering that Britain is relatively small and crowded, and that the United States is large and by our standards sparsely populated. Nonetheless certain aspects of the British situation may have transfer value to the American scene.

The Voluntary Movement

In recent years the increase in membership of the voluntary conservation and recreation organizations has been dramatic. The National Trust³ has increased its membership fourfold to one million members, one in 50 of the population, since 1970. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds⁴ has recently been recruiting 2,000 members a month, and its membership is now some 320,000. There are a score of like conservation organizations, though not as large as these. The informal leisure organizations are also active. For example, the Youth Hostels Association⁵ maintains 272 hostels in Britain, which last year provided nearly 2 million overnight stays for its 277,000 members, and for the many young visitors from abroad who enjoy temporary membership.

With such strength, in both membership and resources, the voluntary conservation and recreation organizations now exert a strong influence on government, which is well received. Indeed, government support for the voluntary movements is now identifiable as a strong component of government policy. I would select this as a first "new direction."

Ownership for Conservation

In Britain, as in the United States and elsewhere, many hold the view that to secure the conservation of a scenic asset or particular habitat, ownership is essential. But little land in Britain is owned by government. Not only is this in striking contrast to your extensive federal and state government land holdings, but current policy in Britain is to diminish the extent of the land already owned by government even more. Furthermore, most of the rural land that has been acquired by government has been for use by the armed services, for afforestation by the national forest authority, or to protect water catchments. Only small areas have been bought and set aside by public authorities for conservation purposes.

In contrast, voluntary conservation organizations are actively acquiring land. The National Trust already owns some 420,000 acres. Both national and county level wildlife conservation organizations now own some 1,400 small nature reserves, and a score of other, smaller trusts are pursuing acquisition policies. I would identify this activity as the second "new direction" in rural conservation in Britain.

The voluntary organizations acquire land by gift from private individuals; through purchase in the open market with funds raised by appeals to members or grants from the state; or through invitation by the state to take land offered in lieu of tax liability on death, which you call

estate taxes. The sort of land they are offered in these circumstances is mainly of poor quality for cropping: clifftop, moor, heath, and marsh. But from these and other sources, the National Trust has acquired for conservation purposes 395 miles of the remaining undeveloped coastline in Britain, and some 225 square miles of beautiful countryside within the Lake District National Park. This sort of land is frequently a reservoir for wildlife and attractive for informal recreation. It needs management.

Conservation Management

Indeed, it needs fairly intensive management because there are no extensive areas, and few small areas, in Britain that can be left to nature. To meet the costs involved, the voluntary organizations owning land need constantly to be raising funds. They do so from their members; by gift, by tea-parties, sales, or whatever. They are helped by grants from government, channelled through organizations such as the Countryside Commission.⁶ But the most interesting feature is that, increasingly, they are persuading their members to help in the processes of land and visitor management. Voluntary help is also commonplace on property owned by public authorities for conservation or informal recreation.

We have learned much in Britain from conservation management practices developed in the United States, particularly in relation to techniques of interpretation but, as demonstrated by the research and experimental work of the Countryside Commission, we have been innovative too.⁷ Certainly the involvement of the public in the tasks of countryside management is particularly noteworthy. The total extent of this kind of public participation is considerable and increasing rapidly. More and more people have the leisure time and interest to play a part. There are voluntary rangers and interpreters, ditch-diggers and wall builders, tree-planters and scrub-clearers. Some will choose to post signs and repair footpaths; clear ponds, canals, and watercourses; protect the breeding sites of birds; help in the care of the contents of great houses; and a thousand-and-one other tasks. They are prepared to make an effort to help conserve what they enjoy.

These facts lead me to suggest that a third "new direction" is strength of the voluntary participation of the public in conservation management.

Control of Development

The decisions in Britain in the late 1940s to subject development and land use, other than for crop or timber production, to control by government are well documented and do not need elaboration here. But it is important to stress that strong policies against new development in the countryside have checked the outward spread of cities and helped maintain a sense of extensive countryside, even in areas such as South-East England, which are among the most densely populated on earth. The control of development remains a key element among the techniques for rural conservation, not only because it protects the resource of countryside from urbanization but also because the processes of survey, analysis, and planmaking associated with it provides an authoritative basis for decisionmaking for conservation purposes.



Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © British Information Services, Central Office of Information, London, 1970.

The Countryside Commission arranged a project with the Matthew Holland County Secondary School at Selston, Nottingham. With the help of the County Planning Authority, pupils are turning a waste site at Selston Colliery, Underwood, Nottingham, into a wooded walk and picnic site.

Special care about development is looked for in areas legally defined as "National Parks," (which are different in concept from those in the United States), "Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty," "Heritage Coasts," "Conservation Areas," (for parts of the built environment of architectural or historic interest), "Nature Reserves," and "Sites of Special Scientific Interest." Such nomenclature can be very confusing without further explanation. Here it will suffice to say that across the land, in country towns, villages, and open countryside, areas covering 25 percent of the land have been given a particular legal identity for conservation purposes. While most of the property and land in the "conservation zones" is privately owned and the owner has limited rights of objection to the controls imposed, if any, the process of defining these areas and the associated government approval has provided a focus for rural conservation effort and emphasis.

It would be wrong to regard these areas as simply "defensive zones." They have been places where ideas for new organizations and new techniques have been tested in practice, and their existence has been a great stimulus for the whole conservation movement. But more than organization and technique are needed. If rural conservation is to succeed, it must be promoted as an essential component of the quality of life. Conserva-

tion of buildings, wildlife, and scenery must be part and parcel of our philosophy for the use of all rural land. This principle finds expression in the other "new approaches" to land management.

New Approaches to Land Management

The fundamental objective behind these new approaches is the harmonizing of public and private interests in land to achieve conservation objectives, using "management plans," "management agreements," and "area management"—the three techniques of "management planning."

These three "new directions" are based on the following propositions:

1) Whatever his rights to the use of land, the owner has also certain obligations: neighborliness, conservation of the basic resource, and responsibility to future generations.

2) When government gives owners advice, a grant, or a tax concession to help produce more food or more timber, or to secure some other benefit, it shares responsibility for the effects of the owners' actions.

3) Such actions invariably have the potential to produce conflicts of interest. More production from farmers and foresters may upset conservationists and recreationists. People can be as damaging to sensitive wildlife as herbicides and pesticides. There are few things more common throughout the world than conflicts between neighbors. And when "neighbors" are a hoard of visitors from a nearby city, the threat to a farmer can be readily appreciated.

4) Hence, if we can diminish these conflicts by devising techniques to bring individual and governmental motivations and actions into closer harmony, we shall serve the many different interests of society in the countryside more effectively.

The objectives of management planning can therefore be interpreted as "bridgebuilding." Management planning cannot be authoritative because it lacks powers of enforcement. It cannot be detached or dispassionate because it depends heavily on influencing the actions of landowners, whether private individuals or a public authority. It relies upon motivating many different interests, public and private, to become involved in solving problems or perhaps forestalling them. It is a joint approach fostered in the belief that whatever the interests or circumstances, we share common aims in conserving our heritage, making the best use of resources and reducing stresses and conflicts between individuals or groups. Management planning can command goodwill and interest since it relates to everyday issues that people understand. It is essentially a participatory form of planning, based on active involvement.

It hardly needs to be mentioned that, if effective, the processes should produce a countryside where beauty and wildlife is not only conserved but enhanced, and that more people can use the countryside for recreation. Certainly, where government, local or national, is the owner of rural land, the highest standards and the best examples of conservation and recreation management should be set.

Management Plans

"Management plans" should be seen as a strategic broad-brush approach. The concept of a management plan for

an extensive area of country in many different ownerships was suggested in 1971, during negotiations for changes in the legislation for the British National Parks.⁸ The idea had its roots in a number of studies in rural planning undertaken in the previous 5 years.⁹ These showed the complexities in coordinating policies for conservation where the land, whether in large or small parcels, is owned by a variety of public and private owners. Each estate may well have its own management plan with its own set of objectives and goals, but such plans could conflict with the public interest in the wider countryside.

The British national park authorities, which are responsible for the conservation of the environment and informal recreation in areas of multiple land ownership of up to 850 square miles, were charged to produce a plan that would show how conflicts in policies could be reduced, and a coordinated policy for landscape conservation and informal recreation defined. This plan would then be implemented by a combination of persuasion, grant assistance, and direct action. It was a considerable challenge for the Countryside Commission to produce advisory notes¹⁰ and for the national park authorities to meet the statutory requirement to produce their management plans in 3 years. But it was accomplished, and the national parks, which cover 9 percent of the area of Britain, have produced and published "management plans."¹¹ Their preparation involved much public consultation and participation, and they commanded surprisingly high levels of local public interest. The advisory committees originally established to prepare the plans have been useful for monitoring their implementation, and the committees are now part of the management planning process.

These plans are now being reviewed. Hopefully, the second and subsequent editions will be even more influential in harmonizing public and private interest in the national parks. It is to be hoped that the officials concerned in their preparation will not make the mistake of being too sophisticated. The acceptability of the plans depends on landowners and farmers, rangers, and other public officials being able to understand them and being motivated to act in sympathy with the aims of the plan.

Plans have been or are being drawn up for other rural conservation areas.¹² This already represents a substantial achievement. The prospect is that within the decade all the "protected" countryside in Britain will be covered by these plans. They are clearly a new direction, and the fourth of the six I identify.

Management Agreements

The "management agreement" can be seen as the management planning technique related to specific units of land. It is essentially a contract between a private owner of land and those acting for society through some agency of central or local government. The owner contracts for a fixed period either to do, or not to do, things relevant to the management of the land. In return, he is provided with financial compensation for the detriment to his interest or expectations. He may also receive practical assistance in securing the objectives of the agreement; the public authority may undertake to do certain work or perhaps to provide a ranger service. Agreements may secure rights of access for the public or relate to the con-

ervation of particular habitats rich in wildlife or areas of country with a distinctive character, such as a stretch of heather moorland. They may ensure the maintenance of an ancient boundary wall or hedgerow, or insure that over a period of time trees are planted and maintained to enhance the quality of an environment.

While the principle of such contractual agreements between private individuals, or the state and the private individual, is not new, the commitment to the application of management agreements to rural conservation and informal recreation in Britain is my fifth "new direction."

I am confident of the worth of management agreements. They can be something of a legal jungle, and they can be costly. But they do represent an alternative to public acquisition and management, which is not only politically difficult but also costly. The subject has been comprehensively reviewed in a recent study¹³ and a number of conservation agreements have recently been hammered out. While much remains to be learned, government is committed to introduce further powers to make such management agreements for rural conservation, and there is a substantial momentum behind the concept. I believe that the long-term formal agreements, with perhaps positive and negative covenants and other legal refinements, should be the fall-back position. They take time to evolve and the processes of creating them create suspicion between the parties. Most of our efforts should be concentrated on informal short-term agreements. In this rapidly changing world, with so much that is unpredictable, private owners and public officials like to keep their options open. On some issues there is little room for flexibility, but unless substantial financial interests are at stake, it is remarkable how much goodwill exists in the minds and hearts of private landowners towards rural conservation. After all, the countryside is where they live and they are proud of its beauty and its heritage. We frequently hear of cases where features of historical value have been lost simply because the owner did not know that they were of interest.

Area Management

The short-term voluntary agreement is at the root of the sixth and final "new direction" I wish to mention. It is a concept called "area management."¹⁴ It concerns those small-scale practical tasks needed for conservation management, but which are not capable of definition in the broad strategy of a management agreement.

Some 13 years ago, experimental work was started by the Countryside Commission in the English Lake District¹⁵ and in the mountains of Snowdonia in Wales in an approach that would help to reduce the conflicts of interest between the visitors to these attractive and popular upland areas with their dogs and litter, and the local farmers and landowners who strive to make a living where climate and soil makes farming difficult. Further experimentation was started a few years later in a part of the urban fringe of London and Manchester,¹⁶ as well as in three of the coastal areas defined as "Heritage Coasts."

A key factor in the concept of area management is the employment of a project officer. He is the person concerned with "getting things done." It appears advantageous if he is not readily identified as an "official," since his "neutrality" is an important factor in his con-



Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © British Information Services, Central Office of Information, London, 1975.

A special agreement with a farmer provided access to Brotherswater for canoers and others.



Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © British Information Services, Central Office of Information, London, 1975.

This picturesque view from the pathway to Mickleden, in the Lake District, is part of the Upland Management Experiment, designed to reconcile farming and visitor interests in areas of scenic and agricultural importance.

tacts with owners and other land managers. He is a "builder of bridges" between them and the remote machinery of government.

The project officer needs special personal qualities. He needs to know about the countryside and, in most areas, about farming. He needs imagination and practical ability; he must be reliable and absolutely trustworthy, because he has responsibility to spend small sums of money. He needs to be able to respond to ideas of others and have a high level of commitment to achieve practical results. He needs an ability to listen and communicate his special knowledge to local people on sources of grants in order to develop and implement management solutions in close association with farmers and other landowners. Finally, he should be able to organize and inspire voluntary effort and other types of labor.



Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © Countryside Commission, 1975.

Joe Gowman at work on a new bridge on the shores of Derwentwater, part of the effort to reconcile farming and visitor interests in areas of scenic and agricultural importance.

There can be no prescription for the size of the area chosen; each will differ. Factors influencing the size will be the number of landowners and the diversity of their interest in the land; the pressures of visitors, be they from a nearby town or vacationers; pressures for development; the extent of neglect and blight; accessibility within the area, which is relevant in upland and coastal areas; and the resources likely to be available. The size of the area is a matter for judgment after careful consideration. The Heritage Coast experiments cover stretches of coastline between 14 and 35 miles long. The experiments in the Lake District covered some 45 square miles in the first stage, and some 220 square miles in the second. One area near London is approximately 50 square miles in extent.

Once the area is chosen, the project officer will begin a process of assessment. This will involve getting to know the area and the people concerned, public officials, private owners, and leaders of voluntary action at an individual level. A lot of time may be spent on this. But during the period, the project officer will be identifying the existing conflicts, learning both about the pressures on the area, and once work has started, monitoring the

reactions to any actions that have been taken. A primary objective is to identify the problems. These need careful appraisal to establish feasible programs of action, within a scale of priorities. Getting things done may require negotiating compromises to resolve local conflicts. The project officer may provide leadership to awaken the imagination and interest of local land managers and the local community. He may stimulate voluntary action and deploy other labor. Getting things done may mean clearing litter and small-scale dereliction; clearing, marking and surfacing footpaths; making small car parks or passing bays; repairing or putting in fences and walls to counter the effects of trespass and vandalism; and amenity planting and other landscape and wildlife conservation work. The work should always demonstrate good craftsmanship. This will command the respect of landowner and visitor alike, and provide support for the work of the officer. These stages of assessment, appraisal, and action are best regarded as continuous and simultaneous rather than sequential.

The actions of area management will involve spending money, though rarely large amounts. If it is organized by a public authority, it will be accountable. Very simple methods of accountability can be devised. In the Countryside Commission's experiments, the officer has been able to spend up to about \$1,000 within his delegated authority. Most of the money is spent on repairing damage caused by visitors on private land. These actions to obtain a public benefit on private land are taken with the agreement of the owner. The project officer is, in a way, implementing the simplest and most informal of management agreements. He or she acts within the limits of his or her delegated authority, and reports actions from time to time. Since the decision to undertake the work is on his direct authority, formal contracts, competitive bids, minutes, and references to committees can be dispensed with. It is in consequence a very economical way of getting things done. The monitoring of these activities by those who are legally accountable, either elected or appointed, provides supervision. As confi-



Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © British Information Services, Central Office of Information, London, 1970.

Students of the Steeple Aston Primary School in Oxfordshire at work on a survey of established rights of way.

dence in the officer increases, his authority can be increased. Experience has shown that considerable value for public money can be achieved in area management, especially when voluntary labor is also available.

Direction and supervision of the area management project is necessary. There is no single formula for designating a steering committee, and each area will have different arrangements. The arrangements for direction should ensure that representatives of government are involved, either through a consultation process or by *ex officio* membership on the steering committee. There is also a need to involve local landowners and users whose goodwill is essential.

Area management is a direct, tangible exercise that operates at a scale people can appreciate. The experiments have engendered local acclaim and support from public officials concerned within the area. The project officer is a catalyst for action and a bridge between broad strategy and detailed work.

Project officers of the right type and personality quickly become identified with the area in which they work and with the people in the area. They can reduce conflicts effectively and economically. Project officers have been able to get things done on the ground and respond quickly in situations that are both of a smaller scale and change on a much more immediate time-scale than the machinery of local government is normally prepared to cope with. People find small local conflicts or signs of conflict irritating. Removing that irritation quickly develops confidence. In farmers, such confidence can help improve agricultural production, which may have economic benefit to the individuals and to the nation.

The actions taken can improve the appearance of an area, particularly if there has been neglect and blight. People become interested because they can see the need for and worth of what is done. This in turn produces a willingness to contribute advice or help, and to give practical and political support. It has been remarkable how effective such goodwill has been in stimulating direct action by the landowners. They may lend machinery, plant trees, make a small parking area, or improve the alignment of a footpath. Furthermore, area management has been an effective way of employing volunteers, prison labor and other offenders, and people on community service employment projects.

The Countryside Commission knows that 39 area management projects are under way. Certainly this is an important "new direction."

The Major Urban Fringe Experiment

The success of this approach led to the idea that a major step forward might be taken, albeit experimentally, by applying the three techniques of area management, management agreements, and management plans to the whole of the area surrounding a major industrial city. Neglected and derelict land, dirty rivers, choked canals, rubbish tips and litter, blocked muddy footpaths, inefficient land use, and conflicts of interest between farmers and visitors are commonplace around the industrial cities of Britain and the western world, and they may blight the countryside for several miles from the edge of the development. The area affected near a city



Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © British Information Services, Central Office of Information, London, 1975.

A stile at Crookwath allows hikers easier access across a private farm to scenic areas.

with 250,000 inhabitants can be up to 100 square miles or more.

The overall aims of the experiment are to:

1. improve the standards of land management, access, environmental quality, and food and timber production in the countryside around a city for the benefit of the city and surrounding settlements, and the economy generally;
2. stimulate an understanding of, and concern for, the countryside around the city, and of the opportunities it offers for recreation and education; and
3. provide liaison with, and information to, other cities in Britain and Europe.

The more specific objectives of the experiment are to:

1. enable the land around the city to be farmed better;
2. reduce the conflict between visitors from the city and farming, forestry, and water conservation interests;
3. clear away eyesores and dereliction and develop a program of pollution control;
4. improve the management of footpaths, bridleways, water areas, public open spaces, small-scale parking and picnicking facilities, country parks, and provide new facilities where necessary;
5. improve the management and planting of small amenity woodlands, trees, and shrubs, and maintain other key features in the landscape, such as attractive hedges, walls, and minor buildings;
6. increase care of wildlife habitats; and
7. interpret the countryside to adults and school children.

After a careful search from an initial list of 21 local authorities who sought to participate in the project, the industrial city of St. Helens in Merseyside, where the main industry is glass manufacturing, was chosen.

At the time of writing, final government approval is awaited, but there is confidence that this will be forthcoming and that the project will start in the autumn of 1980. The expenditure over 5 years will be the equivalent of about \$9 million for project work, assuming some contributions from private owners and charitable trusts. A comparable sum for the clearing and landscaping of

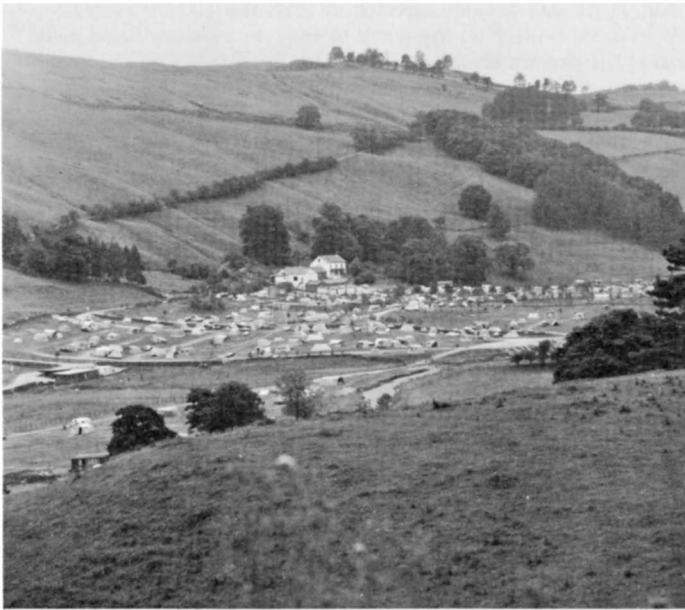


Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © British Information Services, Central Office of Information, London, 1975.

Limefitt Park caravan and camping grounds provides tourists a lovely spot to camp in an agricultural setting.



Photo: Courtesy of the Countryside Commission. © British Information Services, Central Office of Information, London, 1975.

Another attempt to unite farming and visitor interests is demonstrated in the new bridge for hikers at Mickleden.

old coal-mining waste heaps has already been allocated. The return cannot be assessed so precisely. It is important to stress that much that will be done in creating beauty from ugliness and providing places for leisure activity cannot be assessed in money terms. But agricultural officials and farmers are confident that there will be considerable increase in production from land now blighted by trespass, vandalism, and neglect.

There are a great many cities in the western world with degraded urban fringes. Altogether such blight extends over vast areas of countryside. And for many of the less privileged in our great urban areas, this "urban fringe" countryside is the only rural area they will ever visit.

Summary

I have suggested that the "new directions" in rural landscape conservation and informal recreation in Britain are:

1. a rapid growth in the size and influence of the voluntary conservation and recreation organizations, with government support;
2. the acquisition of land by the voluntary conservation and recreation organizations, often with government assistance;
3. the strength of voluntary participation in the work involved in conservation and recreation management;
4. the development of conservation and recreation management plans for extensive areas of land in multiple land ownership;
5. the development of management agreements for small areas of land to bridge public and private interests in the conservation management of land; and
6. the development of the techniques of area management.

Inevitably they reflect our geography: a small, densely populated, long-settled country. They may be applicable elsewhere where there are large industrial and commercial concentrations. Some of the ideas associated with them may have even wider relevance.

The western world faces many common problems. Adaptation to new sources and new costs of energy will affect the environment and tourism. New techniques, in particular the application of electronics, may substantially alter patterns of work and increase the amount of leisure in our lives. There may well be new and unpredictable changes in the use of land to produce crops for purposes other than food. All such circumstances point to the need for a readiness to look toward "new directions" in the achievement of those conservation goals, which more and more members of society are beginning to regard as important. There is a need, too, for even better international communication and I hope this is a useful contribution to that end.

Reg Hookway, director of the Countryside Commission, works through the commission's statutory authority in England and Wales to promote the conservation of the natural beauty and amenity of the environment, and its enjoyment by the public. The commission has responsibility to designate areas for special protection such as national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty, and to maintain a program of experiment and research into techniques and studies for conservation and recreation management.

Mr. Hookway became director in 1971 and he has written and lectured widely on the work of the commission. Previously he was the deputy chief planner in the Department of the Environment, and before that he served in English local government, which he entered after war service in Africa, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece.

References

¹ In this essay Britain is England and Wales.

² "New Agricultural Landscapes:" Westmacott and Worthington. Countryside Commission (CCP 76) 1974; "New Agriculture Landscapes—Issues, objectives and action." Countryside Commission (CCP 102) 1974.

³ For information contact The National Trust, 42 Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW1H 9AS.

⁴ For information contact The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, The Lodge, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2DL.

⁵ For information contact Youth Hostels Association (England and Wales), Trevelyn House, 8 St. Stephen's Hill, St. Albans, Herts. AL1 2DY.

⁶ For information about government grants, contact the Countryside Commission, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 3RA. The Commission issues a regularly updated catalogue of publications about rural conservation and informal recreation. Copies will be sent on request.

⁷ For information see the Annual Reports of the Countryside Commission.

⁸ See Local Government Act 1972. HMSO Schedule 17.

⁹ "East Hampshire, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty—a study in countryside conservation." Hampshire County Council, Countryside

Commission *et al.*, 1968; "The Sherwood Forest Study." Sherwood Forest Study Group, Nottingham, 1974; "The Coastal Heritage." Countryside Commission (HMSO) 1970.

¹⁰ "Advisory Notes on National Park Plans." Countryside Commission (CCP 81) 1974.

¹¹ These plans were produced and published in 1977 and 1978. Copies can be obtained from the 10 national park authorities. To obtain their addresses contact the Countryside Commission.

¹² "The Glamorgan Heritage Coast Plan," 1976, Glamorgan County Council; "The Purbeck Heritage Coast Plan," 1977, Dorset County Council; "The Suffolk Heritage Coast Plan," 1978, Suffolk County Council.

¹³ "A Study of Management Agreement." Countryside Commission (CCP 114).

¹⁴ The term "countryside management" is sometimes used as an alternative to "area management."

(i) "Local Authority Countryside Management Projects." Countryside Commission, Advisory Series No. 10.

(ii) "An Approach to Countryside Management." Advisory display sheet, Countryside Commission.

¹⁵ "The Lake District Upland Management Experiment." Countryside Commission (CCP 93) 1976.

¹⁶ "The Bollin Valley—A Study of Land Management in the Urban Fringe." Countryside Commission (CCP 97) 1976.

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