

THE ACHP'S NATIVE AMERICAN TRADITIONAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPES ACTION PLAN

CAVE ROCK, LAKE TAHOE, NEVADA

CHALLENGE

With the growing recognition that there are large scale historic properties of significance to Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations (NHOs) across the United States, and that such places are increasingly threatened by development, in 2009, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) initiated discussions with Indian tribes and Native Hawaiians about how to address these issues. Pressing Section 106 issues, such as increasing energy development across the country, underscore the need to address these challenges now.

Recognizing the importance of balancing the growing needs of development, while respecting the rights and traditions of native peoples, the ACHP launched a traditional cultural landscapes initiative with the adoption of an action plan in November 2011. The plan calls for the ACHP and the Department of the Interior (DOI) to do the following:

- ▶ Promote the recognition and protection of Native American traditional cultural landscapes both within the federal government and the historic preservation community as well as at the state and local levels; and
- ▶ Address the challenges of the consideration of Native American traditional cultural landscapes in the Section 106 review process as well as in National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews.

BACKGROUND

Since 1992, when Congress amended the National Historic Preservation Act to clarify that historic properties of religious

and cultural significance to Indian tribes and NHOs are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), the ACHP has seen a steady increase in the number of Section 106 reviews involving such historic properties. This increase is likely due to increased development pressures as well as improvements in the Section 106 process involving federal agency consultation with Indian tribes and NHOs. A 2011 Tribal Summit co-hosted by the ACHP and the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers in Palm Springs, California, highlighted the fact that the nation's renewed emphasis on the development and transmission of renewable energy is placing additional strain on landscapes throughout the country and particularly in the west.

The recognition and understanding of Native American traditional cultural landscapes can often be a struggle for non-tribal or non-Native Hawaiian participants in the Section 106 process. The lack of a shared vocabulary among Section 106 participants for identifying, evaluating, and treating these kinds of properties contributes to the challenges.

However, there are numerous large scale historic properties either listed in the National Register or determined eligible for inclusion as a result of the Section 106 process, including Zuni Salt Lake in New Mexico, Bighorn Medicine Wheel/ Medicine Mountain in Wyoming, Nantucket Sound in Massachusetts, Mauna Kea in Hawaii, and Mount Graham in Arizona. While the formal Section 106 process addresses some of the questions of significance and extent, the tribes or NHOs often indicate that large scale historic properties of

CONTINUED >>>

HALEAKALA SUMMIT, HAWAII

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION
PRESERVING AMERICA'S HERITAGE





FT. SILL MEDICINE BLUFF, MEDICINE
MAN GAP, OKLAHOMA

FOR MORE INFORMATION
AND A COPY OF THE PLAN:
www.achp.gov/tcl.html

SEND A COMMENT TO:
landscapes@achp.gov

significance to Indian tribes or NHOs are not fully recognized or understood. Nor are they often recognized as components of even broader cultural landscapes that retain meaning for many Indian tribes or NHOs.

THE ACTION PLAN

The ACHP has advanced the idea that large scale properties might best be addressed as landscapes and has looked to the field of landscape architecture for guidance in developing both a methodology and a shared vocabulary to apply to properties of religious and cultural significance. With adoption of the Native American Traditional Cultural Landscapes Action Plan, the ACHP has outlined specific actions to address the challenges of recognizing and protecting these historic properties through partnerships with other federal agencies, State Historic Preservation Officers, intertribal organizations, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations. It is the goal of the ACHP to broaden this discussion and raise the visibility of this critical subject in the broader historic preservation community.

The ACHP's Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) oversees the action plan in conjunction with staff from the Office of Federal Agency Programs.

ONAA was established in 1998 to do the following:

- ▶ Advise the ACHP chairman, members, and executive director on policy matters and historic preservation issues affecting Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations.
- ▶ Provide technical assistance and outreach to Section 106 participants regarding the role of Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations in the Section 106 process and the national historic preservation program.
- ▶ Participate in interagency initiatives focused on Native American issues. ACHP staff works closely with the ACHP's tribal/NHO member to address critical issues brought to the ACHP by Indian tribes, NHOs, and intertribal organizations.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency, promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of the nation's historic resources and advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy.



ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 803 Washington DC 20004

Phone: 202-606-8503 • Fax: 202-606-8647 • achp@achp.gov • www.achp.gov