



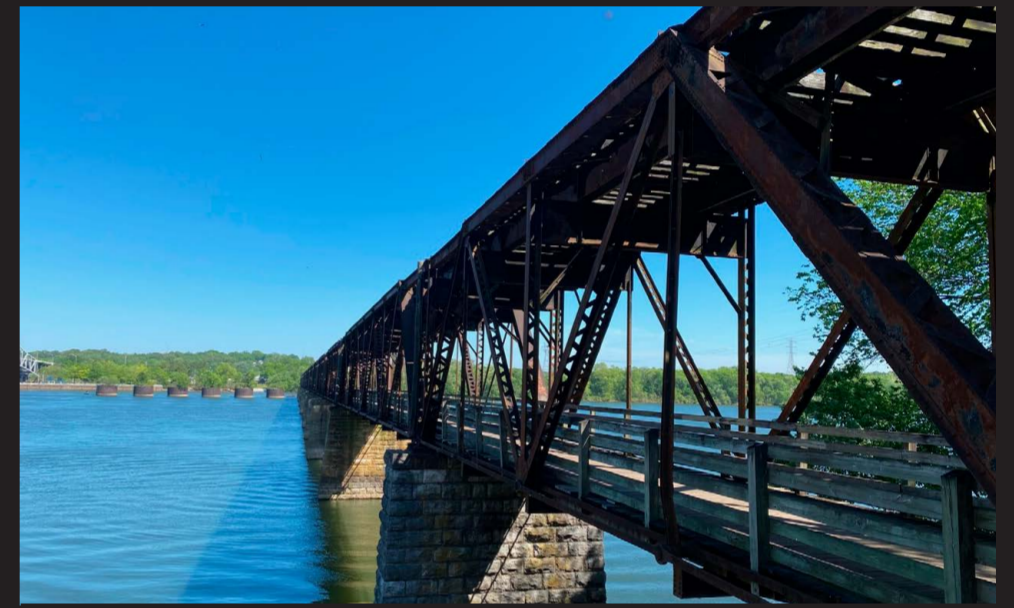
National Heritage Areas (NHA) are community-driven public-private partnerships created by Congress to promote conservation of natural, cultural, and historic resources across nationally important landscapes. The National Park Service (NPS) provides technical assistance and funding to support NHA efforts. These include historic preservation, conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, education, and fostering local pride and stewardship. As of 2023, 62 NHAs in 36 states and territories feature nationally significant stories which illuminate our diverse heritage.



Indianola, MS, houses the BB King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area



Cherokee artisan in the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area



Historic railroad trestle and bridge span the Tennessee River in Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area

Where Nature and Culture Connect

A National System

In 1984, President Reagan signed legislation establishing the first national heritage area. It was a new concept that married preservation, conservation, recreation, education, and economic development. Over the next decades, the number of NHAs grew through various legislation. In January 2023, President Biden signed the National Heritage Areas Act, landmark legislation establishing a system of NHAs and standardizing NPS administration of NHAs to ensure consistency and accountability across the NHA System.



President Reagan signing bill creating the first National Heritage Area, Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Area.

Components of the NHA System

The NHA System is composed of National Heritage Areas, National Heritage Corridors, National Heritage Canalways, Cultural Heritage Corridors, National Heritage Routes, and National Heritage Partnerships.

After the creation of the NHA System in January 2023, the NPS created a graphic "lock up" for the NHA entities to use to show membership of the System.



A MEMBER OF THE
**National Heritage
Area System**

Becoming a National Heritage Area

Feasibility studies are conducted by local supporters of an NHA, with NPS serving an advisory role or, when directed by Congress, by NPS with local participants. Studies examine the heritage area model towards achieving the region's goals, document a public process, analyze a landscape for an assemblage of resources, and gauge local capacity necessary for designation. NPS does not assume ownership of land within NHA boundaries or impose land use controls. Learn more at: www.NPS.gov/HeritageAreas.

Local Coordination

Legislation creating a NHA will name a local coordinating entity (e.g. a non-profit, state/local government, university, or federal commission), typically identified in the feasibility study. The local coordinating entity is responsible for creating a management plan, implementing it in collaboration with the local community, and is the recipient of federal funds administered by the NPS.

Experience National Heritage Areas

NHAs expand the NPS mission by telling nationally important stories that celebrate our diverse heritage. Explore historic sites, seek adventure in natural spaces, or learn about cultures and peoples who shaped this nation. Traverse forested landscapes or glide along a bayou. Walk in the footsteps of Lewis & Clark, Abraham Lincoln, or Ida B. Wells. Discover industries that clothed, forged, and moved our nation. Paddle along canals and view engineering feats that transported a nation. Dance to distinctly American music or taste foods that fed a nation.

Passport Program

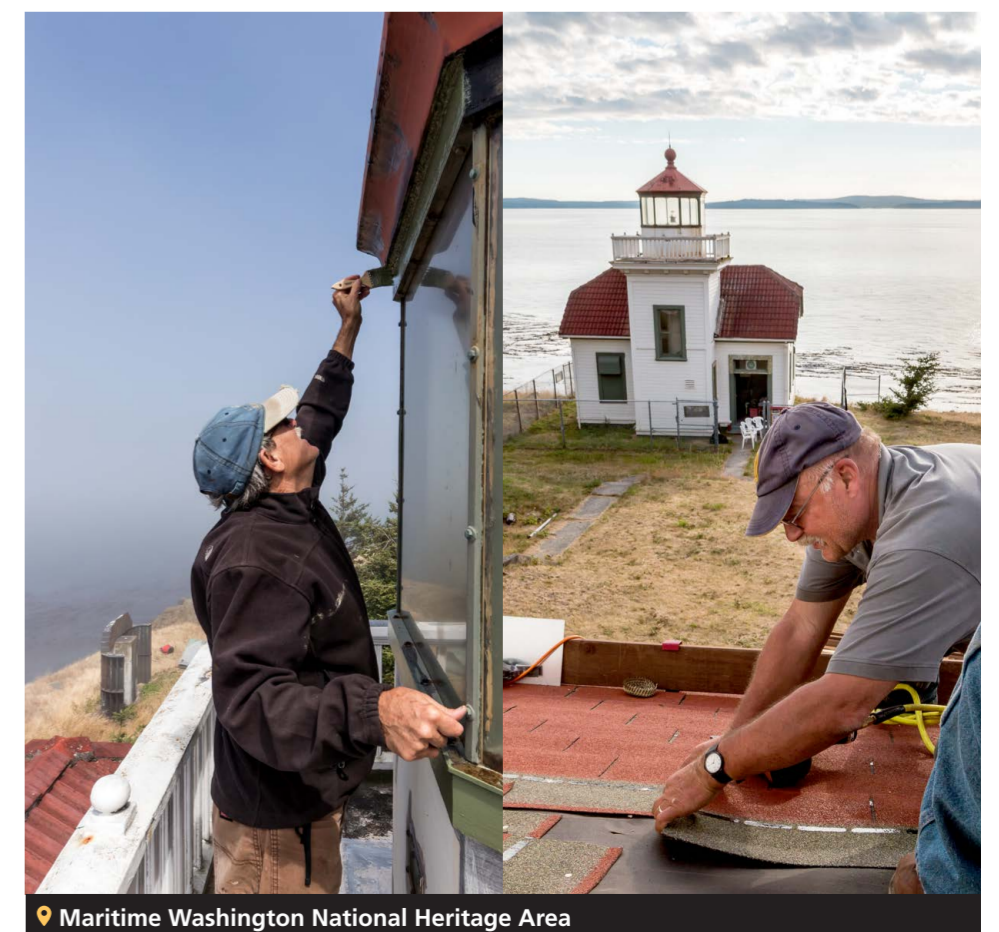
The Passport to Your National Parks® program allows visitors to collect free cancellation stamps at cancellation stations in national parks and NPS-affiliated areas nationwide. Over 39 NHAs participate in a passport program. Learn which ones at our website: www.NPS.gov/HeritageAreas.

Conservation

By working in partnership to conserve landscapes and seascapes, NHAs protect the natural character of place. Conservation efforts lead to improved air and water quality of once polluted areas, healthy ecosystems, and beautiful places to live. These efforts have resulted in the type of holistic development and community engagement that NHAs were created to achieve.

Preservation

NHAs preserve the history of this country through the varied types of resources and cultural expressions that make up NHAs. Through historic preservation tax credits, grants for restoration and rehabilitation, archeological excavations, National Register of Historic Places nominations, and oral history projects, NHAs are preserving important historic buildings, sites, districts, and cultural traditions.



Maritime Washington National Heritage Area

Recreation

NHAs improve visitor access to cultural and natural resources across the country allowing people to enjoy hiking, biking, paddling, walking and running. Many NHA recreation projects create multi-use trails along historic infrastructure such as canals, industrial sites, and railways. NHAs support tourism and community events that help draw visitors, shoppers, and diners. NHAs also offer educational tours, camps, and other outdoor adventures providing recreational activities that connect residents with resources.

Education & Stewardship

Educational and interpretative programs offered by NHAs preserve and protect historic and cultural resources by engaging the public. NHAs work to reach new and diverse audiences, share meaningful stories, and develop curriculum to connect residents, teachers, and students to history in their own backyards. By strengthening the public's understanding of the relevance of heritage sites, a pride of place and an enduring stewardship ethic can grow.

Community Engagement & Sustainable Economies

Quality of life for residents is improved by NHA projects which foster the development of sustainable economies. Heritage tourism projects support the local economies,

increase recreational opportunities, and reconnect residents with resources in their communities. NHAs help increase economic viability by maintaining lands in productive use, leveraging federal funds to support job creation, generate revenue for local governments, and sustaining local communities through revitalization.

National Park Service Role in the System

NPS staff provide technical assistance and financial support appropriated by Congress to NHA local coordinating entities. These entities collaborate with the NPS to implement large landscape conservation through community-driven initiatives. The NHA Act describes the participation of NPS Parks located near or encompassed by an NHA in local NHA initiatives. These partnerships allow both organizations to fulfill shared stewardship, interpretation, and preservation goals.

NHA Program Facts & Funding

Congress makes funds available to NHAs through the NPS Heritage Partnership Program (HPP). Each NHA typically receives annual funding ranging from \$150,000–\$710,000. NHAs match the funds with nonfederal in-kind or cash sources. While NHA designation is permanent, funding from the NPS is authorized for a limited amount and number of years.



Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area



Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area



Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor



Augusta Canal National Heritage Area



Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area

62 National Heritage Areas across the United States

