



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

October 2006

Historical Happenings

Notes on Cultural Resource Management in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Historical Happenings provides information on the USFWS Cultural Resources Management program. Information comes from sources such as the Regional Historic Preservation Officers, websites, new sources, as well as other cultural resource management professionals.

Issues are also available on the USFWS Cultural Resources website <http://historicpreservation.fws.gov>. Submissions are encouraged and can be made via email. Please contact Eugene Marino at Eugene_Marino@fws.gov for submission guidelines.

FWS Regional News:

Washington Office:

The National Wildlife Refuge System and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation announce their Preserve America grant program. Preserve America is a national initiative that directs Federal agencies to account for the economic and educational value of their historic properties (www.preserveamerica.gov). These properties, which encompass historic buildings, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, and museum collections are integral parts of the habitats contained within Refuges. Understanding their importance will only enhance the capability of the NWRS to conserve all of its resources.

The grants, which range from \$10,000 to \$15,000, are competitive and aimed at funding national wildlife refuge educational and interpretive projects that focus on history and historic sites and collections and how they contribute to our conservation and understanding of natural resources.

Please take a look at the Recent News section of the FWS homepage (<http://historicpreservation.fws.gov>) for more information and a link to the RFP.

****Note** Applications will be accepted through November 1st, 2006**

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Region 3— When the staff of the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center in Minnesota (Fergus Falls Wetland Management District) started planning their new

exhibits a few years ago, they wanted to include a space to show interpretive videos, but didn't want to have just a carpeted room or other sterile space. Looking at past visitation, they realized that many members of the local community had relatives that had homesteaded in the area, some with grandparents who grew up on the prairie in the late 1800s. The prairies of western Minnesota shaped the culture and society, and to a large degree, the people that settled here shaped the prairie that exists today.

The staff designed a theater reminiscent of a sod house (Figure 1) – the type of home that the typical western Minnesota homesteader would have lived in when they first arrived on the prairie in the 1860s. Using historical photographs of sod houses and their residents, reproductions and other items on loan from the local historical society, as well as items purchased by the Friends of the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center, the sod house theater brings back the stories and feelings from a century ago. Of course, most sod houses back then didn't have big screen TV's and DVD players!

This unique theater is also used for small interpretive programs, and is a popular exhibit in its own right for the many families that visit the Center. The tie to the local culture has prompted many a conversation with older visitors, some with stories of relatives who lived in sod houses themselves.

So how does a historical exhibit like this further the Service mission? The connection with the heritage of the local community and the memories of what the prairie was like in the past often lead to discussions of what we are doing today to restore, manage and preserve prairie within the Wetland District. It provides relevance for our visitors as they walk the trails at the Center, and see the grasses and forbs they remember from their youth. Finally, it provides a bridge from the past to the present as grandparents; parents and children reconnect with a part of American history. For more information contact Ken Garrahan at Ken_Garrahan@fws.gov

Region 4—Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge has just released a new brochure that depicts and describes five of its well-known and publicly accessible historic cemeteries. The 19th and 20th century cemeteries are some of the few remaining historical features on the property that link the local community to the Refuge. The brochure represents a commitment by the Refuge to documenting these important sites. The brochure can be viewed and downloaded from the cultural resources website (<http://historicpreservation.fws.gov>). For more information contact Richard Kanaski.

Other Agency News

White House—announced the establishment of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument. This monument encompasses area contained within several federal agencies including FWS. See <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/06/20060615-18.html> for more information.

ACHP— is accepting nominations to honor exemplary achievements in protection, preservation, sustainable use, and interpretation of heritage assets.

The Preserve America Presidential Awards are part of a White House program to celebrate and preserve our national heritage. First Lady Laura Bush is Honorary Chair of Preserve America. Four Preserve America Presidential Awards are given each year at a White House ceremony—two for projects or programs that advance heritage tourism and two for outstanding privately-funded historic preservation projects or programs. Organizations, businesses, government entities, and individuals are eligible for an award.

Nominations for the 2007 Preserve America Presidential Awards must be postmarked no later than November 1, 2006. Additional information, as well as a downloadable (fillable PDF) nomination form and details about previous winners, can be found at www.preserveamerica.gov.



Figure 1. View of the sod-house style Prairie Wetlands Learning Center theater

Take advantage of this opportunity to nominate an outstanding heritage tourism or preservation accomplishment for the national recognition it deserves.

FWS—the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission has approved \$28.9 million from the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund for 30 conservation projects in 17 U.S. states and 12 Canadian provinces. U.S. partners in 26 projects will add nearly \$130 million, including more than \$55 million in obligated match, to restore more than 209,000 acres of wetlands and associated uplands. Partners in four Canadian projects will add more than \$7.5 million to improve more than 24,000 acres of habitat.

The Commission's action funds grants to diverse public-private partnerships through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA). The grants are financed by Congressional appropriations, fines, penalties and forfeitures under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, interest accrued to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and excise taxes paid on small engine fuels through the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Fund

Legislative News

The House Resources Committee approved legislation to reauthorize the National Historic Preservation Act. HR 5861 would make a number of changes to the act at the request of the CHP, an independent federal agency that promotes the preservation, enhancement and productive use of historic resources.

These changes, present in both the original version of the bill and a substitute offered by bill sponsor Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., are aimed at preventing the use of a historic eligibility designation to impede development on privately owned land, according to the Resources Committee.

These changes would require a local government that received funds under the act, and that wished to use eligibility determinations to trigger local regulatory requirements, to provide due process protection to property owners through a hearing process. The bill, as amended, also would make some changes to the makeup and rules of the council, allow the council to contract out financial and administrative services and to enter into cooperative agreements, and allow the council to report to Congress and the president on the effectiveness of its grant program and recommendations about funding levels. The substitute would authorize "such amounts as may be necessary." As introduced, the bill would have authorized \$5 million annually through fiscal 2008 and then at \$6 million annually through 2015. The substitute also would give a state or tribal historical preservation officer a 30-day deadline to object to a determination that a project would not harm a historic resource. Further, it would clarify that a federal agency does not have the authority to require an applicant for federal assistance, a permit or a license to identify historical resources outside the area of the proposed project. In 2004, a "discussion draft" bill addressing the same issue would have narrowed the eligibility requirements of historical sites, but that approach met with considerable resistance from the conservation community, according to the Resources Committee.

Training News

Section 106: How to Negotiate and Write Agreements
Madison, WI — October 23-25, 2006

This advanced seminar focuses on negotiating and writing memoranda of agreement and programmatic agreements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Learn about problems to avoid and guidelines to consider, and how to use—and not misuse—online resources and other tools. An agenda is available online at www.npi.org.

NAGPRA and ARPA: Applications and Requirements
Madison, WI — October 26-27, 2006

Explore the regulatory requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) as they apply to ground-disturbing activities conducted on federal and Tribal land. Review coordination of these laws with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Examine differences in legal definitions,

when and how they apply, and permit requirements. Discuss practical applications and effective strategies for developing a plan of action.

Instructor: Claudia Nissley, president, Nissley Environmental Consultants; former director, Western Office, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation And Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office; specialist in preservation issues relating to NHPA, NEPA, CERCLA, ARPA, and NAGPRA

A registration form is available online at www.npi.org/register.html. The regular registration rate is \$575 for 3 days (106 Agreements); \$425 for 2 Days (NAGPRA/ARPA); and \$875 for both seminars.

Questions? Please contact us. Thank you.

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On December 6, 2006 from 8am-5pm and Dec. 7, 2006 from 8am to 12 noon in Washington DC, FEMP will convene a meeting planned by Federal agency staff to examine synergies in the areas of energy efficiency and historic preservation. Prepared presentations will share program activities within each agency and "best practices" in simultaneously enhancing both historic preservation and energy efficiency. Open discussions and breakout groups will identify obstacles and recommend possible solutions as well as identify topics that require more research.

Please contact me if you would like to request an invitation

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Upcoming Events, Education, and Volunteers and Friends News

Requests for Information