

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

Natural and Cultural Resources Management **Part 614 Cultural Resources Management**
Chapter 5 Interpreting Cultural, Archaeological, & Paleontological Resources for the Public **614 FW 5**

5.1 What is the purpose of this chapter?

A. This chapter establishes U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) policy for public outreach and interpretation to foster emotional and intellectual connections between the visitor and any cultural resources on Service-owned or managed land.

B. Such activities may involve:

- (1) Volunteers,
- (2) Friends groups,
- (3) Visitors,
- (4) Cooperating associations, and
- (5) Concessionaires,

C. The activities may include:

- (1) Museum collections,
- (2) Heritage tourism, and
- (3) Heritage education.

5.2 What are the authorities, definitions of terms, and responsibilities for this chapter?

See 614 FW 1 for information about the authorities, terms used, and responsibilities for all the chapters in Part 614.

5.3 What is the policy on interpreting these resources for the public? Project Leaders/Field Station Managers, with the assistance and advice of their Regional Historic Preservation Officer (RHPO) and other Outreach/Interpretation Specialists, as required, must:

A. Treat resources as fragile and irreplaceable assets that are:

- (1) Important and integral to our Nation's heritage,
- (2) Important to National Wildlife Refuge System or National Fish Hatchery System history,
- (3) Important for public and scientific uses, and
- (4) Important for maintaining the identity and heritage of descendant communities.

B. Ensure a high quality visitor experience and enjoyment of these resources on our lands through interpretation programs that use a variety of delivery methods (e.g., self-guided or

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scheduled tours/presentations) and that are factually accurate, interesting, and engaging. Such programs:

- (1)** Develop a sense of stewardship leading to actions and attitudes that reflect interest and respect for cultural resources, history, and the environment;
- (2)** Provide quality interpretive experiences that help people understand and appreciate the cultural resources of an individual refuge or hatchery and its role in the Refuge or Hatchery System;
- (3)** Provide opportunities for quality recreational and interpretive experiences consistent with interpretive methods, accessibility, and evaluation of interpretive programs as we describe in 605 FW 7;
- (4)** Assist refuge or hatchery staff, volunteers, and community support groups in attaining knowledge, skills, and abilities in support of cultural resource interpretation; and
- (5)** Minimize conflicts with visitors participating in other compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities.

C. Foster:

- (1)** Public/private initiatives and investment in the use, reuse, and rehabilitation of these resources; and
- (2)** Awareness among students and adults of the fragility and importance of these resources through heritage education programs.

D. Promote community economic development through State and local governments, Native American tribes, Native Hawaiians, Alaska natives (called “tribes/native organizations” throughout the remainder of this chapter), and private sector partnerships in heritage tourism.

E. Involve representatives of local communities, tribes/native organizations in developing interpretive presentations, especially when they focus on a description of a living local community or tribe/native organization or its archaeological, historical, cultural, artistic, and ethnic heritage.

F. Develop sustainable and durable heritage tourism opportunities that minimize the negative effects of tourism and, at the same time, maximize the benefits for local communities, States, and tribes/native organizations.

G. Incorporate site-appropriate design principles for such things as preservation projects, kiosks, walking paths, and informational signs that are sensitive to the character of the site and its surroundings, and that do not endanger the site’s long-term preservation.

5.4 What are the benefits the public and the Service derive from interpreting these resources for the public? The public receives many benefits from Service knowledge, research, and conservation of cultural resources.

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A. Information benefits:

(1) The public gains knowledge about:

- (a) The history and cultural resources of an individual refuge or hatchery and how they are connected to them today,
- (b) Actions they can take to protect fragile and irreplaceable cultural resources,
- (c) Opportunities to provide more information about the history and culture of the refuge or hatchery,
- (d) Fossilized remains still recoverable from public lands, and
- (e) Past and contemporary cultures as a result of formal archaeological, anthropological, or historical investigation.

(2) This knowledge may relate to environmental adaptations, cultural evolution, or other research topics validated by study within the fields of anthropology and archaeology.

B. Applied benefits: Knowledge people derive from the interpretation of these resources can have application for contemporary issues. For example, faunal remains recovered from an archaeological site may indicate environmental changes or show what habitat might be suitable for endangered species or for reintroducing plants and animals into their historic habitats.

C. Socio-cultural benefits: The general public and specific cultural groups may benefit by better recognizing the richness and complexity of another group's culture and history. This can lead to an increase in intercultural tolerance, greater appreciation for multicultural perspectives, and increased economic opportunities. For example, interpreting cultural resources related to a group's ancestral or historical roots may help people to realize the group's contributions to the regional culture, and enhance the group's sense of belonging or place.

D. Economic benefits: Communities may receive tangible fiscal or economic gains as a result of cultural resources, primarily as a result of heritage tourism. Heritage tourism represents a very significant segment of State and local economies, and the Service expects it to grow in the years ahead.

E. Recreational benefits: Outdoor and history enthusiasts use cultural resources as a focus for their personal recreation. These groups benefit by gaining an increased sense of place and connectedness to, and appreciation for, their historical roots through museum exhibits or heritage presentations they observe. As with any recreational and tourism attraction, economic benefits usually accompany recreational benefits.

F. Educational benefits: Heritage education benefits people of all ages by increasing their knowledge about extinct mega-fauna, cultures past and present, and special heritage places on public lands. We use cultural resource materials to improve student reading, writing,

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mathematics, reasoning, and higher order thinking skills by developing lesson plans, hands-on activities, and multi-media products. Heritage education programs can inspire and stimulate a broad range of community groups while improving knowledge and respect for other cultures.

G. Intra- and Intergovernmental benefits: When Service cultural resource studies, conservation methods, and interpretation benefits are shared with other Federal, State, tribal, and local governments, it improves relations with them. Effective public outreach with local user groups, museums, tribes/native organizations, or other interested parties also may lead to good public relations.

H. Management benefits: Well-designed interpretive programs can be effective and powerful resource management tools. For many visitors, taking part in an interpretive program may be their primary contact with a refuge or hatchery, the Refuge or Hatchery System, and the Service. It is their chance to find out about refuge or hatchery cultural resource management objectives and could be their first contact with the conservation and interpretation of cultural resources. Through these contacts, staff have the opportunity to influence visitor attitudes about cultural resources, refuges, hatcheries, the Refuge and Hatchery Systems, and the Service, and to influence visitor behavior when visiting Service lands.

I. Other benefits: Interpretive planning and subsequent activities and products can also:

- (1) Provide opportunities for visitors to become interested in, learn about, and understand cultural resource management and our fish and wildlife conservation history;
- (2) Help visitors understand the history and cultural aspects of site-specific refuge and hatchery lands and resources;
- (3) Communicate rules and regulations to visitors to promote understanding and compliance and solve or prevent potential cultural resource management problems;
- (4) Help staff make management decisions and build visitor support by providing insight into management practices; and
- (5) Help visitors become aware and enjoy quality cultural resource experiences on the refuge or hatchery.

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