

National Historic Landmarks Program



What is a National Historic Landmark?

National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) are nationally significant historic places that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. NHLs are designated by the Secretary of the Interior. As of January 2024, there are 2,635 NHLs.

How is a property designated as an NHL?

The process starts with a formal letter to the NHL Program from interested proponents, both public and private. Nominations may be prepared by individuals, consultants, organizations, or NPS staff.

The NHL Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board reviews completed nominations and presents their recommendations to the Board, which in turn refers recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior. Once designated by the Secretary, a property becomes an NHL and is concurrently listed in the National Register as a NHL.

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What are the benefits and restrictions associated with being designated?

Benefits of designation include formal recognition of the significance of a property in American history; eligibility for certain federal, state, and nonprofit grants and preservation incentives; technical assistance with preservation from federal and state agencies; and review of federal or federally-funded, permitted, or licensed projects that might affect the property. Designation does not place any restrictions on what an owner may do with their property up to and including demolition.



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