



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) Talking Points—U.S. Senate ASLA In-District Advocacy Day

- ASLA is requesting that Senators urge the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to include funding for the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS).
- The purpose of HALS is to document historic landscapes in the United States and its territories through measured and interpretive drawings, written histories, and photographs.
- Historic landscapes are fragile and are increasingly at risk from development, neglect and many other threats. Documentation is an important tool for the preservation of these significant sites.
- With many public works, infrastructure and energy exploration projects being fast-tracked as part of an economic stimulus package, historic documentation of the sites, properties and landscapes will be required for projects to meet compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and with the National Environmental Protection Act. A well-funded HALS program can assist with these documentation efforts.
- A national effort to document important landscapes across the country will also provide important jobs for landscape architects, GIS specialists, surveyors, historic preservation specialists and other professionals. Identifying and documenting important sites will also enrich local communities and could help increase surrounding property values.
- In March of 2008, Representative Russ Carnahan (MO), along with 25 other Members of Congress, sent a letter to the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee requesting \$800,000 in funding for HALS in FY 2009. Currently, Congress has not acted on finalizing the FY 2009 Appropriations bill.
- HALS was established by the National Park Service in 2000 under authority granted in the Historic Sites, Buildings, and Antiquities Act of 1935 and the national Preservation Act of 1966 and is similar to other National Park Service programs that document historic American buildings (HABS) and structures of technological and engineering significance (HAER).
- HALS liaisons located throughout the 50 states are currently working on documenting culturally and historically significant landscapes in their local areas. **(Discuss local examples and state fact sheet, if available).**
- Currently, the program receives minimal NPS funding (\$20,000 in FY07) and is run by one National Park Service employee. Much of the work is carried out through volunteers and private donations. Adequate funding for HALS would support cores staff as well as allow the program to provide technical assistance and small seed grants to local groups. Much of the work will continue to be carried out on the local level.
- With the few resources currently available, HALS cannot provide the range of technical and financial assistance necessary to support more than a handful of projects.
- HALS is a documentation program. Therefore, HALS does not limit development, affect property rights, or involve the purchase of land.
- A request for **funding for HALS is not an earmark**. Because HALS is an already established federal program within the National Park Service, requests for funding for HALS are considered a “programmatic request.”
- **ASK: Urge the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to include \$800,000 in funding for HALS FY 2010.**