

HABS/HAER/HALS MITIGATION DOCUMENTATION

Under the provisions of Sections 106 and 110b of the amended National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, federal agencies are required to produce documentation to HABS/HAER/HALS standards on buildings, structures, sites, and objects that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places to mitigate the adverse effects of federal actions such as demolition or substantial alteration. Six National Park Service regional offices, charged with external historic preservation responsibilities, administer the HABS/HAER/HALS mitigative documentation program. The actual work is usually conducted by contractors and supervised by the responsible Federal agency. The documentation produced is reviewed by the regional coordinator and transmitted to the HABS/HAER/HALS Washington office for final review and inclusion in the HABS/HAER/HALS collections at the Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/>).

INTRODUCTION

The HABS/HAER/HALS collection documents historic buildings, sites, structures and objects that include residential, commercial, public, monumental, religious, military and industrial resources. Various building technologies and materials are represented, as well as periods and styles from the 17th to the 21st centuries. The collection includes records of properties in all of the States and several of the territories, comprising resources of national, state and local significance, including both the unique and the vernacular.

Through its more than 75 years of existence, the HABS/HAER/HALS collection has accepted drawings, photographs, and written documentation from many sources. HABS/HAER/HALS records have been contributed through the Depression-era public works projects that initiated the HABS program; by students on summer teams and in university courses; through the Peterson Prize competition; through donations; through HPF-funded projects sponsored by SHPOs; and through mitigation documentation resulting from Sections 106 compliance.

By accepting documentation into the Library of Congress collection from these varied sources the collection has developed and maintained a representative quality and continues to carry out its goal to provide architects, engineers, scholars, and interested members of the public with comprehensive documentation of buildings, sites, structures and objects significant in American history and the growth and development of the built environment.

What is the basis for and value of mitigation documentation?

The National Historic Preservation Act requires that Federal agencies make appropriate records of historic properties that will be substantially altered or demolished by their actions, and that these records ultimately be deposited in the Library of Congress. The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Architectural and Engineering Documentation specify that the National Park Service determines the appropriate level of documentation for such mitigation, and that the level of documentation reflects the significance of the resource.

By recording Federally-owned or managed structures and properties being affected by Federal projects, HABS/HAER/HALS mitigation documentation increases the breadth and depth of the collections. The volume of mitigation documentation had grown significantly since records began being produced in the 1970s and has greatly increased the size of the HABS/HAER/HALS collection. Mitigation documentation currently forms one-third of the entire HABS/HAER/HALS collection.

How is this system put into practice?

In practice, HABS/HAER/HALS mitigation documentation is linked to the Section 106 review process, in which Federal agencies or their designees are directed, usually in a Memorandum of Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Officer, to contact the appropriate NPS field office for a determination of the level and type of documentation for each property to be affected; NPS must review and accept the documentation before demolition or other work may be carried out. The application of this practice varies from one part of the country to another, and from one state to another. Some states have a large number of Adverse Effect findings, and routinely require HABS/HAER/HALS documentation for as many as fifty properties per year, many of local significance. Other states rarely make use of the mitigation documentation program, either because they require other forms of mitigation or because they specify other forms of documentation which are not deposited in the Library of Congress.

Mitigation documentation is generally specified as Level II or Level III, as defined in the Secretary's Standards for Architectural and Engineering Documentation. The Standards state that Level I is appropriate only for nationally significant structures, and since nationally significant properties rarely come through the 106 process, Level I documentation is not commonly required.

HABS/HAER/HALS MITIGATION PROGRAM—CONTACTS

HABS/HAER/HALS Washington Office

Mailing Address: *Department of the Interior, NPS, Heritage Documentation Programs, 1849 C Street, NW, 2270, Washington, DC 20240*
Delivery Address: *National Park Service, Heritage Documentation Programs, 1201 Eye St., NW (2270), Washington, DC 20005*
Fax Number: *(202) 371-6473*
Contacts: *Anne Mason, Collections Manager, (202) 354-2165
anne_mason@nps.gov*

AKSO—Alaska Support Office

Mailing Address: *240 W. 5th Avenue, Room 114, Anchorage, AK 99501*
Fax Number:
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IMRO—Inter-Mountain Regional Office; AZ, CO, MT, NM, OK, TX, UT, WY

Mailing Address: *P.O. Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225-0287*
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Lysa Wegman-French, Historian, (303) 969-2842
Tom Keohan, Historical Architect, (303) 969-2897*

NERO—Northeast Regional Office; CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, VA, WV

Mailing Address: *U.S. Custom House, 3rd Floor, 200 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106*
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Lisa McCann, Architectural Historian, (215) 597-0651
Bill Brookover, Historical Architect, (215) 597-1774*

MWRO—Midwest Regional Office; AR, IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI

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OH	<i>Geoffrey Burt, Landscape Historian, (402) 661-1918</i>
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PWRO—Pacific West Regional Office; CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA, Pacific Islands

Oakland Office: CA, HI, NV, Pacific Islands

Mailing Address: *1111 Jackson Street, Suite 700, Oakland, CA 94607*
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Seattle Office: ID, OR, WA

Mailing Address: *909 First Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104-1060*
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SERO—Southeast Regional Office; AL, GA, FL, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, VI

Mailing Address: *100 Alabama Street, NW, NPS/Atlanta Federal Center, Atlanta, GA 30303*
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Contacts: *Deborah Calloway, Archives Technician, (404) 507-5775*