



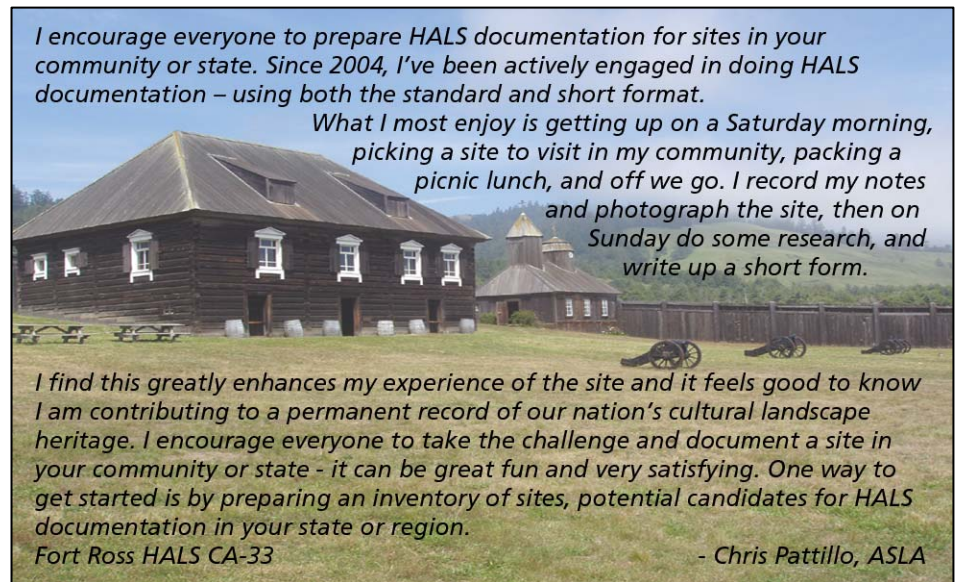
Preparing a HALS History

Brief Guide to Identifying and Documenting HALS Sites

What is the Historic American Landscapes Survey?

Following the approval of enabling legislation by the National Park Service (NPS) in 2000, the NPS, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), and the Library of Congress (LOC) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that established the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) the following year. HALS is a federal program that documents historic landscapes in the United States and its territories to serve as tangible evidence of our nation's heritage and development. Documentation is critical to preserving historical landscapes for the benefit of future generations and can provide rationale for the planning and funding of future landscape preservation efforts. Like its companion programs, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), HALS produces written and graphic records of interest to educators, land managers, and preservation planners as well as the general public.

NPS administers the planning and operation of HALS, selects and approves landscapes for documentation, standardizes formats and develops guidelines for recording landscapes, and catalogs and/or publishes the information when appropriate. ASLA provides professional guidance and technical advice for the program through its Historic Preservation Professional Practice Network. LOC accepts and preserves



I encourage everyone to prepare HALS documentation for sites in your community or state. Since 2004, I've been actively engaged in doing HALS documentation – using both the standard and short format.

What I most enjoy is getting up on a Saturday morning, picking a site to visit in my community, packing a picnic lunch, and off we go. I record my notes and photograph the site, then on Sunday do some research, and write up a short form.

I find this greatly enhances my experience of the site and it feels good to know I am contributing to a permanent record of our nation's cultural landscape heritage. I encourage everyone to take the challenge and document a site in your community or state - it can be great fun and very satisfying. One way to get started is by preparing an inventory of sites, potential candidates for HALS documentation in your state or region.

Fort Ross HALS CA-33

- Chris Pattillo, ASLA

Chris Pattillo is a founding member of the Northern California Chapter of HALS. Please see its website <http://www.halsca.org/scapes.htm> and blog <http://halsca.blogspot.com/> for more tips for organizing and promoting HALS documentation in your state.

HALS documents, furnishes reproductions of material, and makes records available to the public.

Which Sites are Good Candidates for HALS Documentation?

Historic landscapes that:

- are threatened,
- are easy to access,
- stimulate your interest,
- already have some existing written history,
- you have already worked on professionally, and/or
- represent America's cultural diversity.

The HALS Inventory is the list of historically significant landscapes. Appropriate landscapes are significant at the national, state, or local level. They can vary in size from small gardens to several thousand-acre national parks. In character, they range from designed to vernacular, from rural to urban, and from agricultural to industrial landscapes. Estate gardens, cemeteries, farms, theme parks, nuclear test sites, suburbs, and abandoned settlements all may be considered historic landscapes. For more guidance on selecting sites, see the inset, "Identifying Historic Landscapes."

Documentation projects may be completed by HALS Liaisons (see more information about liaisons in the next section), ASLA Chapters, and any other interested individuals or organizations.



Where is Information on Documenting Historic Landscapes?

The National Park Service Heritage Documentation Program website (www.nps.gov/hdp/) provides detailed guidelines for producing landscape architectural measured drawings, large-format photography, and written history reports according to HABS/HAER/HALS standards. Documentation produced through the programs constitutes the nation's largest archive of historic architectural, engineering, and landscape documentation. Records on over 40,000 historic sites are maintained in a special collection in the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress and are available to the public copyright free in both hard copy (in the Library of Congress) and digital (via the Web) formats (www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/).

You must download histories, drawings, and photographs in the collection before printing them. Currently the Library website only hosts digital documents in tiff format, but pdf format documents should soon be available. The tiff format histories must be downloaded and printed one page at a time by first selecting the link: *Highest Resolution Image (Compressed TIFF)*.

There are two formats that may be used for HALS history documentation. Critical need, time, and resources will all factor into your decision of which format to use.

1. Standard Format

The standard format is a long historical narrative and descriptive report that is prepared using the standard HALS outline format, but must otherwise be prepared as an original document. It is divided into five sections: the Identification Information, Historical Information, Descriptive Information, Sources of Information, and Project Information. The standard form also should include supporting graphics with captions.

Standard Format Example: John Bartram House and Garden, HALS PA-1, www.loc.gov/pictures/item/PA3904

2. Short Format

The short format was devised for situations in which detailed information is unnecessary, unavailable, or when time or funding is limited. It is also prepared as an original document. The written history section of the short format is generally a one to five page distillation of the standard outline format. The short form also may include supporting graphics with captions.

Short Format Example: The Clearing, HALS WI-8, www.loc.gov/pictures/item/WI0686

Identifying Historic Landscapes

1. The landscape must be historic.

Following National Register tradition, historic landscapes are usually at least 50 years old. Younger landscapes may be considered historic if they possess exceptional significance. A property that has achieved significance within the last fifty years can be evaluated only when sufficient historical perspective exists to determine that the property is exceptionally important and will continue to retain that distinction in the future.

2. The landscape must be historically significant in one of the following categories: (If you answer yes to any of the following questions, the historic landscape is significant.)

- Is the landscape associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history?
- Is the landscape associated with the lives of significant persons in our past?
- Does the landscape embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction?
- Has the landscape yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory?

3. The historic landscape must possess integrity in location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

4. The historic landscape may be threatened or endangered by potential development.

5. The historic landscape may be representative of a "common" or familiar landscape.

Consider, for example, a farmstead in the Midwest developed by Scandinavians. There may be many examples of it, but they are unique to one region and not found in other parts of the country. This includes ethnographic landscapes, etc.

6. There should be a desire to document the historic landscape.

A landscape that is managed by a state, county, local park, or historic society that is interested in preserving the historic character or qualities, may be sufficient for documentation.

7. The historic landscape may already be on a list or identified in a catalog, yet not thoroughly documented. Possible lists may include National Historic Landmarks, ASLA Medallion Sites, State Historic Preservation Office lists, DOT Scenic Byways program lists, and Olmsted or other designed park lists.

For further information please see the following websites:
www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb18/
www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb30/
www.nps.gov/history/hps/TPS/briefs/brief36.htm

Format Instructions and Additional Information

Guidelines for preparing Standard and the Short format HALS documentation are provided on the NPS website under (www.nps.gov/history/hdp/standards/halsguidelines.htm). Instructions for the Standard Format are provided in Section 2 (page 9) of the *Histories* link, and instructions for the Short Format are provided in Section 3 (page 22). A digital MS Word template for the Short Format HALS History is also available at this website to help get you started.

Blank copies of the Release and Assignment Form are provided on page 2 of this template as well as in Appendix A of the Guidelines. Completed Release and Assignment Form(s) must accompany all donated HALS histories to cover the history and accompanying graphics, if any. Materials must be copyright-free to be included within the Library of Congress collection. If copyright releases cannot be obtained for graphics, the graphics may still be referenced and described in the text with their repository source named. A thoroughly written analysis may be even more useful to readers than a copy of photograph itself.

Standard format and short format history documentation should be coordinated in advance with the HALS office (Paul Dolinsky, Chief, Historic American Landscapes Survey, 202-354-2116, Paul_Dolinsky@nps.gov). The office will assign landscapes with a HALS state



number.

Throughout the documentation process, please consult with your State HALS Liaison. State HALS Liaisons are listed on the ASLA HALS webpage (www.asla.org/HALS.aspx?id=10088) by clicking on the *HALS Chapter Liaisons* subheading link.

HALS Liaisons are ASLA volunteers appointed by their chapter president and provide technical and other types of assistance for carrying out the mission of the HALS program. Each ASLA Chapter should have one HALS Liaison, and Chapters that include multiple states should have one Liaison for each state.

For additional information on initiating a HALS documentation project, please review the referenced NPS website, including HALS guidelines, sample

projects, and contact information.

Format Transmission and Processing

Once completed, histories are submitted to the HALS office, where they will be scheduled for transmittal to the Library of Congress. The Library then processes these documents, and assigns a digital identification number. Visitors may search Library's website (www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/) for documentation projects of interest.

Note: the HALS office transmits documentation records to the Library of Congress quarterly by region (Mid-Atlantic in December; Midwest and Intermountain in March, Pacific-West in June, and Southeast in September). After transmittal, it will take the Library a few months to process the documentation and make it available to the public.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



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ASLA