

National Heritage Areas

An Option for the California Delta? - Draft Concept



Delta Protection Commission
7/24/08

What are National Heritage Areas (NHA)?

- A "national heritage area" is a place designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These areas tell nationally important stories about our nation and are representative of the national experience through both the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved within them.

NHA's

Combine preservation, recreation, economic development, heritage tourism, and heritage education to interpret and promote their region's distinctive landscape.



John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley NH Corridor



Cane River NHA

Since 1984, 37 places have been designated as NHAs



Examples

- 2) John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley NH Corridor
- 12) Ohio & Erie Canalway NH Corridor
- 13) Rivers of Steel NHA
- 15) Silos and Smokestacks
- 20) Yuma Crossing NHA
- 25) Mississippi Gulf Coast NHA

Benefits of NHA Designation (Tangible)

- Limited financial assistance from NPS that provides valuable "seed" money that can help with staffing and leveraging other money from state, local and private sources
- Planning and interpretation assistance and expertise from NPS
- Helps to connect with other federal agencies
- Use of NPS arrowhead symbol, thus helping with regional branding efforts



Benefits of NHA Designation (Intangible)

- Retain and interpret the landscape for future generations
- Protect community identity, pride and sense of place
- Educational and inspirational opportunities that encourage residents and visitors to stay in a place
- Building of strong commitment to stewardship
- Offer a collaborative approach to conservation that does not compromise local control over the landscape

NHA vs. National Park

- NHAs are locally managed designations over a complex matrix of public/private lands
- The Federal government does not impose land use controls to NHAs and no federal land acquisition authority is granted with designation
- NHA initiatives are coordinated by a local entity in partnership with stakeholders that work collaboratively on projects to meet stated management plan goals
- NPS enters into an agreement with the local parties, assessing mutually shared goals

Consistency with Delta Protection Act

- Goals of the Delta Protection Act include, but are not limited to, the protection of the Delta's agricultural, ecological, and recreational resources.
- From obtaining NHA designation, partnerships could be developed to support projects for protection and enhancement of these resources.

Consistency with Land Use and Resource Management Plan

- The following are excerpts from goals or recommendations of the DPC land use and resource management plan:
 - Protection, restoration and enhancement of Delta wildlife habitat
 - Preservation and recognition of the Delta's cultural heritage in public/private facilities
 - Public education of the value and rich heritage of the Delta's agriculture
 - Encouragement of new recreational facilities which take advantage of the Delta's unique characteristics
- These things, amongst others, could partially be achieved through projects stemming from NHA designation.

Case study #1 – Silos and Smokestacks (America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership) *Regional Branding*



Case study #2 – Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area *Ecological Restoration*



Case study #3 – Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor *Historic town revitalization*



NHA Criteria

1. An area has an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed as such an assemblage through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities.
2. Reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story.
3. Provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and /or scenic features.
4. Provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities.
5. The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation.

NHA Criteria (cont.)

6. Residents, business interests, non-profit organizations, and governments within the proposed area are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants including the federal government, and have demonstrated support for designation of the area.
7. The proposed management entity and units of government supporting the designation are willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area.
8. The proposal is consistent with continued economic activity in the area.
9. A conceptual boundary map is supported by the public.
10. The management entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described.

How is the Delta significant on a National Level?

- **Natural Heritage**
 - One of the only 'Inverse Deltas' in the world
 - Second largest estuary in U.S.
 - Pacific flyway stopover
 - Mediterranean climate, but supports anadromous fish
 - Inland delta in the middle of huge urban areas
 - Provides a large amount of natural resources to California and beyond
- **Cultural Heritage**
 - Gold Rush Corridor
 - Major center for water based recreation
 - Multi-Cultural Rural Landscape
 - Key act of hydraulic infrastructure/engineering
 - Productive agricultural region which shipped products throughout the world
 - Innovative center for agricultural Equipment Invention

Natural Heritage and Natural Resources



Pre-1850 chart of the Sacramento River (current Rio Vista to Sacramento) for Gold Rush navigation

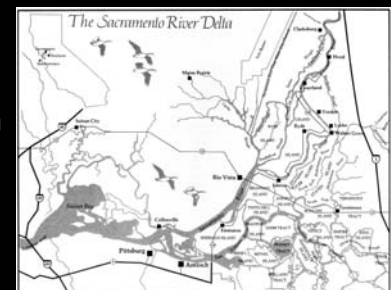


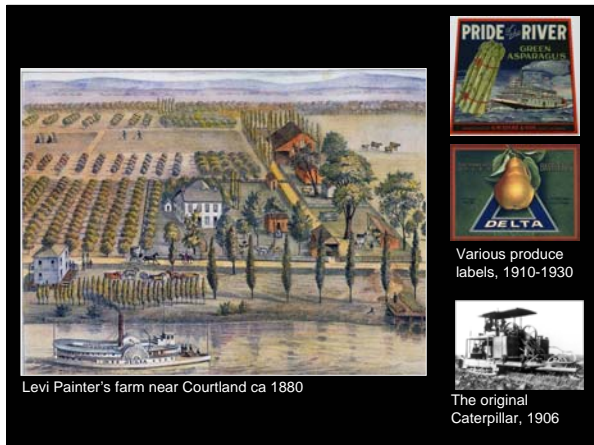
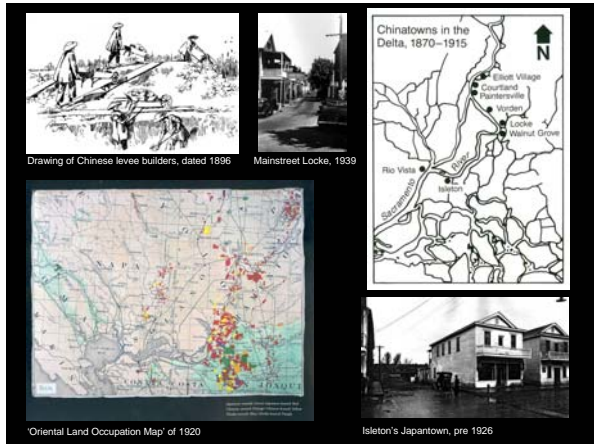
Reclamation began in the 1850's

Steamboat Landings into Towns

'Legacy Towns'

- Clarksburg – 1849
- Walnut Grove – 1850/1
- Rio Vista – 1857
- Courtland – 1870
- Isleton – 1874
- (and more)





Steps to obtain designation

1. Completion of a suitability/feasibility study
2. Public involvement in the suitability/feasibility study
3. Demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed designation
4. Commitment to the proposal from appropriate players which may include governments, industry, and private, non profit organizations, in addition to local citizenry



NHA management entity

- May be a state or local agency, federal commission or private nonprofit corporation
- Empowered to create a management plan for the NHA, and is authorized to receive federal funds on the area's behalf
- Plan describes how management entity and partners will work together towards common vision
- Authority to implement the management plan is local – rests in hands of willing local officials, local organizations and individuals
- Does not provide management entity or any federal agency with authority to regulate land use

Potential Projects

 Ecological Restoration	 Regional Branding	 Historic Preservation
 Heritage Tour Routes	 Agritourism	 Ecotourism

More Information

- National Park Service:
www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/
- Alliance of National Heritage Areas
www.nationalheritageareas.org