Cultural Landscapes

Methods for Heritage Conservation and Community Engagement

Julie McGilvray, MLA/MSHP
University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning
Objectives:

- What are cultural landscapes?

- How do we identify, record, and treat cultural landscapes?

- What is the relationship between the cultural landscapes concept and the National Register of Historic Places?

- What are some current issues in cultural landscapes work and studies?

- How can we use this concept to better engage partners, communities, and other stakeholders for better heritage preservation and conservation?
“a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values”
“Cultural landscapes are complex resources that range from large rural tracts covering several thousand acres to formal gardens of less than an acre. Natural features such as landforms, soils, and vegetation are not only part of the cultural landscape, they provide the framework within which it evolves.

A cultural landscape is a reflection of human adaptation and use of natural resources and is often expressed in the way land is organized and divided, patterns of settlement, land use, systems of circulation, and the types of structures that are built.

The character of a cultural landscape is defined both by physical materials such as roads, buildings, walls, and vegetation, and also by use reflecting cultural values and traditions”

NPS-28 (Cultural Resources Management Guideline)
Cultural Landscape methods for documentation - What are we after?
Cultural Landscape methods for documentation - What are we after?

Create a hierarchy for inventory, documentation, and analysis through:
Cultural Landscape methods for documentation - What are we after?

Create a hierarchy for inventory, documentation, and analysis through:

- Resources/Features
- Cultural Landscape Characteristics
- Cultural Landscape Character
Resources and Features: Inventory and Documentation

Landscape Feature:

“The smallest physical unit that contributes to the significance of a landscape that can be managed as an individual element.”
Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources/Features:

Contributing:

A Resource or Feature that contributes to the historical significance of the landscape. It adds to the historic associations, historical architectural qualities, or archaeological values for which a property is significant because of the following: it was present during the period of significance; it relates to the documented significance of the property; it possesses historic integrity or is capable of revealing information about the period; or it independently meets the National Register criteria.
Cultural Landscape Characteristics: Documentation and Analysis

refers to the processes and physical forms that characterize the appearance of a landscape and aid in understanding its cultural value.
Landscape Characteristic

is defined as the tangible and intangible characteristics of a landscape that individually and collectively give a landscape character and aid in understanding its cultural value.
Landscape Characteristic

is applied to either culturally derived and naturally occurring processes or to cultural and natural physical forms that have influenced the historical development of a landscape or are the products of its development.

The appearance of a cultural landscape, both historically and currently, is a unique web of landscape characteristics that are the tangible evidence of the historic and current uses of the land.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Systems and Features</th>
<th>Topography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spatial Organization</td>
<td>Vegetation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>Buildings and Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Traditions</td>
<td>Views and Vistas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster Arrangement</td>
<td>Constructed Water Features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>Small Scale Features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Archeological Sites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Landscape Character: Analysis

The combination of landscape characteristics that convey the overall character of a landscape and associate it with its significance.

Landscape Character is the total effect and result of the interaction between humans and nature in a cultural landscape.
Other things to consider for Landscape Character:

- Total Environment (night sky, fauna, sensory elements, historic uses/continuity of use)

- Was the place wild, rural, urban? Does it still feel/look this way?
Types of Cultural Landscapes:

- Ethnographic
- Designed
- Historic Site
- Vernacular
Ethnographic Landscape:

A landscape containing a variety of natural and cultural resources that the associated people define as heritage resources

- defined by traditionally-associated community
- may have pre-contact and historic use
- may be rural or urban
- may relate to subsistence, ceremony, community values
Designed Landscape:

a landscape that was consciously designed or laid out by a landscape architect, master gardener, architect or horticulturist according to design principles or an amateur gardener working in a recognized style or tradition.

- design or work of art;
- designed by landscape professional, or
- according to recognized style or tradition
- Historic or prehistoric - can date to pre-contact period
Vernacular Landscape:

a landscape that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped that landscape.

Through social or cultural attitudes of an individual, family or a community, the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of those everyday lives.

- physical layout and use reflects everyday traditions and values
- evolves over time
Historic Site:

a landscape significant for its association with a historic event, activity or person.
Using these concepts:

- Use the Feature, Landscape Characteristics, Landscape Character to document, inventory and analyze a place.

- Use Landscape Character and Landscape Types to help with identifying associated stake holders, communities, cultural groups.

- Use the full set of concepts and methods to help with planning and establishing management objectives for place.
Tools for Cultural Landscape Documentation, Analysis, Evaluation and Treatment:

- Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI)
- Cultural Landscape Report (CLR)
Landscape history
Significance
Analysis of landscape characteristics
Landscape character
Integrity evaluation
Boundary
Eligibility

Primary treatment
Management Objectives
General treatment recommendations
Area-specific treatments
Preservation Maintenance
Tool Kit:

Oral Histories  
Census Records  
Deeds  
Previously completed research: Surveys, Histories, etc.  
Historic Photos  
Current Photos (to compare)  
Historic Aerial Photos  
Current Aerial Photos  
Topography maps  
Archeological information  
Drawings (Maps, Architectural, etc)

Organization Tools:

GPS/GIS  
Archives  
Collections  
Reporting
Cultural Landscapes and the National Register of Historic Places

- Similarities to NRHP Districts or Sites
- Boundaries
- Property types (NRHP) translate to Features in the Cultural Landscape
- Greater Systems/Processes Analysis to Cultural Landscape Approach
- Same use of significance and integrity
Treatment of Cultural Landscapes:

Secretary of the Interior Standards for Historic Properties:

- Preservation
- Rehabilitation
- Restoration
- Reconstruction
• Cultural Landscapes are evaluated by NRHP standards for age, significance and integrity

• Cultural Landscapes reveal on-the-ground interrelationships between resources

• Cultural Landscapes acknowledge complexity in our environments

• Cultural Landscapes may reveal intangible aspects of our environments (views, night sky, sensory elements)

• Cultural Landscapes often have continuing meaning for communities/stakeholders

• Where there is a Building, there is a Landscape

• Natural Resources can have cultural value
Issues in Cultural Landscapes:

- Confusing?
- Boundaries
- Interdisciplinary Team is Needed
- May Reveal multiple stories/difficult histories
- Expensive/Time Consuming
Community Engagement and Cultural Landscapes: