



COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL REPORT
Meetings via Zoom
June 2021

COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE CALL SUMMARY

Communications, Education, and Outreach (CEO) Committee Chairman Luke Nichter began the conference call June 15 with introductions and said the goal of the committee call was to get member feedback on outreach efforts at this time and to prepare for a more in depth discussion during the July ACHP committee and business meetings.

Webinars

Chairman Nichter opened the discussion with a brief recap of the webinars OCEO has offered during the past five months, with Lynne Richmond providing information on speakers and other logistics. Chairman Nichter suggested the ACHP continue to offer webinars for the variety of audiences that had been suggested in the past—specifically students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions. He noted that the webinar format allows the agency to reach new audiences, and suggested making this a regular part of ACHP outreach.

Kristopher King said he has found online programs give his organization a remarkable reach with regard to education and advocacy efforts, and he likes the idea of continuing to use webinars. He wondered what the numbers are for the ACHP’s audiences, and the return on investment statistics.

Jessica Kelly suggested a “things you didn’t learn in school” type of theme. Ramona Bartos suggested that OCEO focus on high school students, as well, which has come up in past discussions. She supports Chairman Nichter’s efforts to work with National History Day. ACHP Vice Chairman Jordan Tannenbaum suggested reaching out to tribal colleges, as well.

Partnerships

Susan Glimcher gave an overview on the latest programs and projects happening with Latinos in Heritage Conservation. She said after positive conversations with the co-chairs, the ACHP will be strengthening its partnership in order to help support a new digital project in Texas to collect, curate, and amplify stories about Latino historic places. Latinos in Heritage Conservation board members will join the CEO Committee for the July meeting. Katherine Slick suggested partnering with Asian American heritage groups, for instance on railroad history and suggested that former member Terry Guen would be a good person to contact.

Vice Chairman Tannenbaum suggested adding outreach to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts as well as Boys and Girls Clubs in cities would be a good avenue to pursue. Ms. Slick mentioned it would be worthwhile to look at what other opportunities might exist within the ACHP membership and how to build on those to work together. Shasta Gaughen suggested finding the platforms youth are engaging with, like short videos and more social media channels.

“American Artifacts”

Chairman Nichter noted that OCEO is planning a pitch to C-SPAN to offer several Section 106 Success Stories as story ideas for the show “American Artifacts” on C-SPAN 3 (American History TV). This would be a way to promote the ACHP and make connections with C-SPAN, as well as offer compelling human stories and ways to expand the historic preservation message. He suggested making the pitch at the end of July/early August, so the network could potentially produce shows during the congressional recess.

Vice Chairman Tannenbaum suggested the Boston Naval Shipyard as a potentially good story. Ms. Slick suggested Spaceport USA in New Mexico. Reno Franklin suggested revisiting the definition of success and telling the true, fuller story about the places. He suggested a story about Indian boarding schools with a multi-faceted approach, for instance the efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

PRESERVATION INITIATIVES COMMITTEE CALL SUMMARY

Committee Chairman Rick Gonzalez convened the Preservation Initiatives (PI) Committee June 16 and discussed whether to tee up several legislative topics and specific bills for discussion at the July committee and business meetings.

Legislation

Participants discussed bills relating to surface transportation and agreed to explore them more in-depth at the July committee meeting. One proposed legislative provision would require the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to consider context-sensitive design and develop guidelines for doing so. There was consensus that this could be a huge opportunity to improve highway design near historic properties and possibly to remove or redesign highways that have cut through historic urban areas, often through disadvantaged communities of color. Pending surface transportation bills also propose more funding for transportation alternatives, which can support historic preservation projects. Committee members stressed the importance of advocating for accessible historic resource digitization to inform project planning. The committee also discussed the need to address proposed legislative provisions that would require a General Accounting Office study of the ACHP’s Rail Rights-of-Way Program Comment and would streamline Section 4(f) review.

The committee discussed efforts to expand existing conservation corps activities, especially related to climate change. Six bills focused on conservation corps have been introduced, but only one mentions cultural resources. The committee would like to pursue pushing for inclusion of cultural resources in these bills. Vice Chairman Tannenbaum proposed an ACHP internship to help frame how historic preservation can advance the Administration’s climate agenda and develop a case statement/talking points. Participants noted that documentation and oral histories are crucial preservation activities in areas that will be lost to sea level rise. The vice chairman also noted that climate change is a cross-cutting issue for multiple ACHP committees.

Regarding community revitalization, two bills are pending—the Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity (HTC-GO) Act, which includes short-term and permanent credit increases, as well as expanded opportunity to access the credits, and the REHAB Act, which is focused on using older buildings near public transportation for affordable housing development. The PI committee will encourage support for this legislation.

Climate Change

The Office of Preservation Initiatives (OPI) is undertaking a review of historic resource-related climate change plans and guidance prepared by State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs). The goal is to

compile a set of annotated links to what is publicly available, and to note needs for additional planning and guidance. OPI staff requested that the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) ask its members to provide links to resources they have shared or are developing. OPI will also be talking to the Native American Affairs Committee and National Alliance of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers to see what Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) have been doing in this regard.

The National Park Service (NPS) announced it has just released updated, illustrated design guidelines for flood adaptation rehabilitation. The downloadable document, a recorded webinar, and an FAQ are all available at <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/guidelines-on-flood-adaptation-for-rehabilitating-historic-buildings.htm>.

NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CALL SUMMARY

Committee Chairman Reno Keoni Franklin opened the committee meeting June 17 with a discussion about disaster preparedness and response for Indian tribes. Jaime Loichinger reviewed the paper prepared by the Office of Native American Affairs and the Office of Federal Agency Programs that includes several recommendations for member consideration. Chairman Franklin asked about the possibility of leveraging technology for Indian tribes to use in preparation for disasters and talked about fire seasons. Dr. Gaughen noted that Indian tribes need more access to digitized information in order to protect their sites in emergencies.

Vice Chairman Tannenbaum discussed emergencies in relation to climate change and asked about the most efficient way to address this issue. He also noted every ACHP committee is discussing climate change, and he thinks a more global approach is necessary rather than each committee addressing the issue independently.

Reid Nelson discussed some interesting opportunities in the Biden Administration, particularly regarding digitization, to address the need for information immediately in an emergency and having information available in the field on remote devices. He suggested considering establishing a task force or subgroup to start looking at this issue. Chairman Franklin agreed with the idea of a task force and asked the vice chairman to carefully consider the composition of such a group to include Native American perspectives. He also asked the committee to continue looking at the issue.

Vice Chairman Tannenbaum noted that digitization is expensive and is a potential hurdle to address. Chairman Franklin talked about California's digitization efforts and noted that it is not as expensive as some might think.

Dr. Gaughen noted that climate change discussions should not just be about digitizing information but also helping tribes develop adaptation plans specific to protection of cultural resources, to include protection of the intangible; the ability to have ceremonies at certain times of the year; and addressing loss of important plants due to climate change. Therefore, the ACHP should expand the scope to protect traditions and activities. She also volunteered to serve on the proposed climate task force.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland discussed digitizing records. He anticipates bringing more issues for discussion from the Department of the Interior (DOI) for the July meeting. Beth Savage pointed out that this is a fundamental issue and should be part of historic preservation funding. There could be specific funding targeted in the Historic Preservation Fund.

Upcoming Initiatives

Chairman Franklin then moved to discuss the 30x30 initiative and the America the Beautiful initiative. He emphasized the need for respect for traditional knowledge and asked for thoughts on land and water conservation. Mr. Nelson noted that the ACHP has sent several letters written to DOI expressing interest in assisting with America the Beautiful and to ensure cultural conservation is part of the initiative. He asked how the ACHP can help. Chairman Franklin noted the need for meaningful conversations with DOI, and Mr. Newland acknowledged the ACHP's outreach.

Mr. Newland also talked about the program for taking lands into trust for Indian tribes which pre-supposes land development rather than considering land into trust to conserve or protect it. He would also like to change the way the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) co-manages land with tribes and fold it into the 30x30 initiative. He said he would welcome ACHP suggestions. Mr. Newland noted Interior Secretary Deb Haaland is a champion of this initiative, and BIA wants to make sure tribes are part of it. He also noted that Indian tribes want to conserve lands to conserve and protect treaty and cultural resources. Chairman Franklin said he looks forward to a partnership with DOI.

Traditional Knowledge

Chairman Franklin then gave a brief update on the traditional knowledge (TK) information paper and noted that he is pleased with the results. He also explained that staff has begun drafting an outline of TK guidance. Vice Chairman Tannenbaum would like a briefing about TK and the guidance.

Mr. Franklin noted that the agency will count on agency partners to help identify their needs as well as ways to improve the guidance. He would also like to include Guam, America Samoa, and other Pacific Islands.

Ms. Savage asked when the guidance will be shared with agencies, and Mr. Franklin suggested that it would be shared soon. He wants federal agencies to see the guidance framework to get their thoughts before it is developed further.

FEDERAL AGENCY PROGRAMS COMMITTEE CALL SUMMARY

Committee Chairman Jay Vogt called the meeting to order June 16 and welcomed participants. He noted this would be Tom McCulloch's last committee meeting, as he is retiring on June 30. Chairman Vogt conveyed his appreciation for Dr. McCulloch's long and successful career in federal service, and wished him the best of luck in retirement.

Infrastructure and Surface Transportation Legislation

Chairman Vogt then turned to Mr. Nelson to lead a discussion regarding recent developments with infrastructure and surface transportation legislation. Mr. Nelson noted that agencies and preservation stakeholders are hearing a lot about these efforts, and wanted to discuss what opportunities exist within them to advance historic preservation goals. The goals of the Digital Information Task Force could coincide, as that action plan had a general directive to pursue funding that would augment, support, and enhance digital and GIS mapping data about cultural resources across the country, especially as they relate to planning for infrastructure. The ACHP is aware of Senate and House versions of these bills being circulated, but it is early in the process.

Colleen Vaughn noted that there are high level discussions regarding these bills within the Department of Transportation (DOT), with an emphasis on green infrastructure and climate resiliency. There is also interest in ensuring that the data can be used across agencies to improve coordination. A workgroup within the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council is looking at how GIS can be used to improve efficiencies. As an example, she noted that state DOTs can have environmental systems in place

for stakeholders to coordinate reviews, which includes SHPOs and tribes.

Tom Cassidy noted that Section 1312 of the FAST Act recognized that information gathering and mapping were eligible costs for DOT funds, and the committee should consider how to use existing authorizations to meet these goals, instead of creating new ones. Erik Hein noted that some states have done this, in cases where there is a good working relationship between the SHPO and the state DOT. David Clarke noted that using these funds for this purpose is at the state DOT's discretion. Mr. Clarke also said digitization is the biggest interest in his agency right now, as hard copies of maps and other information is inefficient; there is an opportunity to expedite reviews when the information is accessible via expanded GIS mapping. As demonstrated during COVID-19, there is a need for rural broadband access; the ACHP should advocate for efficiencies there.

Mr. Nelson pointed out that there are many existing solutions, such as program comments, for broadband and telecommunications, but they may not be enough for a larger rollout. Chairman Vogt began transitioning the discussion by noting that digitization would expedite the delivery of broadband access. Mr. Clarke noted that FHWA would work with the ACHP on developing case studies to show how Section 1312 of the FAST Act can be used to support digitization and historic preservation efforts.

Ms. Slick noted that the ACHP should try to be proactive in sharing ideas for surface transportation bills now, before they are drafted within the House and Senate. Mr. Nelson noted that the ACHP is poised to advance its digitization goals as part of this effort.

Section 106 and Climate Change

Chairman Vogt asked Mr. Nelson to introduce the topic of climate change, which is a subject of importance to the Administration. Mr. Nelson said that while the ACHP has repeatedly heard about climate change, there remains a need for a broad assessment of what the ACHP can do to assist agencies in considering the effects of climate change on historic properties. This is a broad topic with many sub-categories, and the ACHP is interested in understanding how agencies are incorporating climate change considerations into their programs and undertakings.

Vice Chairman Tannenbaum suggested pulling the agencies together to collaborate and determine what is already being done. For instance, Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plans (ICRMPs) include climate change issues. Ms. Slick questioned what might be included in a programmatic agreement, such as the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Nationwide Programmatic Agreement. Jeff Durbin observed that NPS has issued guidelines on flood adaptation that may be useful. Mr. Franklin said he likes the idea of bringing everyone together, but need to remember that climate change has resulted not just in increased wild fires, but other phenomena, as well, and this means it can be tied back to emergency preparedness. During the recent wildfires, he tracked the requests to the state information centers for information regarding historic properties; it took an average of three days for that information to be relayed back to the agency. In an emergency situation, that is too long, and this information also speaks to the need for digital information. Mr. Hein noted that the topic needs to be broken down, and then target agencies with the smaller focus areas.

Mr. Cassidy noted that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has changed its Hazard Mitigation Grant Program title to Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), which reflects the consideration of climate change in its activities. Jennifer Hass offered a briefing on the BRIC program to the ACHP. Mr. Nelson noted that this topic will likely be discussed further in July.

BLM Nationwide Programmatic Agreement

Dr. McCulloch noted that as the largest land manager, BLM has relied on its nationwide Programmatic Agreement (nPA) to manage its Section 106 responsibilities. The nPA was originally executed in 1997,

and in 2012 its term was extended for an additional 10 years. At this time, BLM is looking to extend the current agreement for another two years. Dayna Ables noted that the requested extension would not change any other provisions within the nPA but would provide time for BLM to host the necessary consultation meetings to consider modifications. Dr. McCulloch clarified that while the nPA is executed among BLM, the ACHP and NCSHPO, because of the scope of the nPA, he wanted to keep the committee apprised of the amendment process.

Other Business

The program comment panel is continuing its work and hopes to convey its recommendations to the vice chairman soon.

The vote regarding the ACHP's position on the Save Oak Flat Act is currently underway and was later extended to June 21, due to the federal holiday on June 18.

The Section 3 and leveraging reports are being implemented to the extent they can, pending the arrival of an ACHP chairman.