



Preserving America's Heritage

ACHP Policy Statement on the ACHP's Interaction with Native Hawaiian Organizations

Adopted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
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Introduction

The history of the United States is enhanced by the many cultures and peoples that make up this nation. These cultures and peoples bring together diverse languages, ceremonies, practices, rites and stories; all of which add to our nation's vibrancy and strength, engender our compassion, and define our collective history.

Native Hawaiians, the indigenous people of our 50th state, bring a culture to this country that is unique. Theirs is a history of a proud people who, like other Native peoples of our country, have struggled to maintain their culture amidst other prevalent influences of American society.

Native Hawaiians have begun to more assertively recall their heritage as a great Polynesian people. Their ceremonies and cultural practices have been reborn and their language is thriving. Their historic sites are reminders of their prowess as ocean navigators, agricultural innovators, and as a successful multi-tiered, complex society that existed for hundreds of years before Europeans left their homelands.

Native Hawaiians bring their values to the historic preservation dialogue, values that are often shared by other Native peoples. Among others, these include:

- A deep love and understanding of the land;
- A respect for the powerful forces of nature;
- An understanding of an ever-evolving society and the need to reflect that in sites and buildings;
- A need to minimize their footprint on the Earth, so as to leave it capable of accommodating many generations to come;
- A historic view that Native Hawaiians stand on the work of past ancestors and have a responsibility to their children to appreciate that context;
- A deep obligation to their ancestors, to their memory and to their resting places; and,
- An enjoyment of their very brief time on this earth and all it has to offer.

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The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), therefore, is committed to fully considering these values as it carries out its responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Furthermore, the ACHP recognizes the significant contribution that Native Hawaiians have and continue to make to the enrichment of this nation.

Authority

The ACHP, an independent federal agency established by the NHPA, advises the President and Congress regarding historic preservation matters; recommends legislative and administrative improvement to protect America's heritage; encourages federal agencies to make their programs and policies advance the national historic preservation goals; and, through the Section 106 review process, ensures that Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, state and local governments, and the public have a voice in the federal decisions that affect historic properties.

Purpose

This policy sets forth the commitments the ACHP makes to ensuring that Native Hawaiian organizations have the opportunities to which they are entitled under the NHPA to participate in the national historic preservation dialogue and program. The ACHP also believes that the NHPA and regulations implementing Section 106 of the NHPA, 36 C.F.R. Part 800, set the minimum standards for federal agency interaction with its preservation partners.

The basis for this policy regarding the ACHP's role, responsibilities, and relationships with individual Native Hawaiian organizations derives from the NHPA, particularly at 16 U.S.C.470a(d)(6). This policy sets forth actions the ACHP will take to oversee the implementation of its responsibilities under the NHPA with respect to the role afforded to Native Hawaiian organizations in the NHPA.

Since the NHPA is the governing authority, all terms used in this policy find their definitions in that Act. Therefore, this policy pertains to Native Hawaiian organizations as defined in the NHPA at 16 U.S.C. § 470w(18) as follows:

Native Hawaiian organization means any organization which-

- Serves and represents the interests of Native Hawaiians;
- Has as a primary and stated purpose the provision of services to Native Hawaiians; and,
- Has demonstrated expertise in aspects of historic preservation that are culturally significant to Native Hawaiians.

"Native Hawaiians" in turn, are defined in the NHPA at 16 U.S.C. 470w(17) as follows:

Native Hawaiian means any individual who is a descendant of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now constitutes the State of Hawaii.

Policy Principles

This policy sets forth principles that will guide the ACHP's interaction with Native Hawaiian organizations as it carries out its responsibilities under the NHPA. It also provides guidance to the ACHP and its staff and serves as the foundation for ACHP policies and procedures affecting Native Hawaiian issues. Upon adoption of the policy, the ACHP will revisit the *Action Plan on Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Native American Initiatives* (2003) to determine its consistency with this policy and make any necessary revisions.

The ACHP, in carrying out its NHPA responsibilities with regard to projects in Hawaii has found that there are particular challenges for Native Hawaiian organizations in participating in the national historic