

Finding of No Significant Impact: Quincy Mine Historic Landscape Cultural Landscape Report / Environmental Assessment Keweenaw National Historical Park, Michigan

Background

Keweenaw National Historical Park was established by Public Law 102-543 in 1992. The park commemorates the rich and complex story of copper mining on the Keweenaw Peninsula. The purpose of Keweenaw National Historical Park is fourfold:

- *Tell the story of the role of copper in the development of an American industrial society and the effects on the Keweenaw Peninsula of providing that copper.*
- *Identify, study, and preserve the nationally significant historical and cultural sites, structures, districts, landscapes, and other resources of the Keweenaw Peninsula for the education, benefit, and inspiration of present and future generations.*
- *Interpret the historic synergism among the geological, aboriginal, sociological, cultural, technological, economic, and corporate influences that relate the stories of copper on the Keweenaw Peninsula.*
- *Develop and sustain into the 21st century the park and the community through a blend of private, local, state, and federal management, investment, and ownership.*

The National Park Service (NPS) has completed a Cultural Landscape Report and Environmental Assessment (CLR/EA) that provides an analysis of the environmental consequences for the management concept of rehabilitating the historic landscapes of the Quincy Unit of Keweenaw National Historical Park. The focus of this integrated CLR/EA was on the Quincy Unit, which includes approximately 1,120 acres immediately northeast of Hancock, Michigan. The 1,120 acres includes lands owned by the NPS, non-profit organizations and private landowners.

A purpose of the CLR/EA is to document and record the historical and current conditions of the Quincy Unit landscape and provide guidance for its future treatment and use. Another purpose of the CLR/EA is to inform the NPS and the Keweenaw Heritage Site (KHS) partners (as well as any potential partners), local government and private landowners on preservation of significant cultural and natural resources while providing for visitor education and use.

The CLR / EA is needed to guide treatment and use of the aboveground resources associated with the significant historic landscapes within the Quincy Unit. The park's General Management Plan indicates the need for a CLR, in part because the NPS owns only a small portion of the land within the Quincy Unit. Private landowners, non-profit and institutional organizations, own the majority of land within the Quincy Unit. The CLR provides a comprehensive understanding of the historic development of the landscapes, evaluation of their

significance and treatment recommendations that are appropriate to the historic characteristics. These treatment recommendations were needed to accommodate current and future needs of the NPS, KHS partners and visitors.

Alternatives

The CLR/EA includes four alternative landscape treatments for the Quincy Unit in its entirety and a smaller area focus on the Historic Industrial Core of the Quincy Unit. The landscape treatments for the Quincy Unit are at a broader, general scale while the treatment recommendations for the Historic Industrial Core of the Quincy Unit are at a more detailed scale.

The treatment alternative descriptions include the current management (no action alternative) and three action alternatives with proposals for changes to the management of the landscape. The Current Management Alternative (no-action alternative) provides the basis for evaluating changes and impacts associated with the three action alternatives. The action alternatives are titled Treatment Alternative A, Treatment Alternative B, and Treatment Alternative C. No other alternatives were evaluated.

Current Management Alternative (no-action)

Under the no-action alternative, the historic landscape at the Historic Industrial Core of the Quincy Unit would continue to be managed as it is currently and no new policies would be implemented. With this treatment alternative, the primary historic landscape resources, including the major intact buildings, large building ruins, and limited landscape features, would be preserved and interpreted.

This alternative would not meet project objectives because many of the unit's resources, including an extensive collection of landscape features, would be left to deteriorate. This would eventually result in the loss of significant resources. Successional vegetation would fill in where not impeded, decreasing historic integrity while increasing wildlife habitat and creating a more naturalistic environment in the Historic Industrial Core. The emphasis of this treatment alternative is on maintaining existing features.

Treatment Alternative A

This alternative provides for rehabilitation of cultural resources with an emphasis on landscape preservation. This treatment alternative recommends establishment of a visitor center at the Supply House. This alternative better meets project objectives than the no-action alternative and Treatment Alternative B, but would not meet project objectives as well as Treatment Alternative C. Treatment Alternative A would result in less documentation and evaluation of existing conditions of the historic landscapes than the other action alternatives.

Treatment Alternative B

This treatment alternative also provides for rehabilitation of cultural resources with an emphasis on landscape restoration; however this treatment alternative recommends establishment of a NPS visitor center outside the Historic Industrial Core; which would provide for less effective visitor contact. This treatment alternative would meet project objectives better

than the no-action alternative, but would not meet project objectives to the extent that Treatment Alternatives A and C would.

Selected Alternative (Preferred Alternative) – Treatment Alternative C

Treatment Alternative C was determined to be the selected alternative and the environmentally preferable alternative because it meets the project objectives better than the no-action alternative and any other treatment alternative. Treatment Alternative C provides for rehabilitation of cultural resources with more emphasis on landscape restoration than the no-action or other treatment alternatives. Treatment Alternative C recommends that one combined visitor center would serve the A.E. Seaman Museum, the NPS and the Quincy Mine Hoist Association. Treatment Alternative C was determined to be the environmentally preferred alternative when measured against the six criteria listed in Section 101 of NEPA. The recommended treatments for the Selected Alternative are summarized below.

Criterion 1

Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations, is best met by the Selected Alternative, which emphasizes:

- Reuse and restoration of existing lands already disturbed by past mining activities.
- Minimal disturbance of undisturbed lands.
- Selective removal of vegetation to allow interpretation of viewsheds and cultural resources.

Criterion 2

Assure for all generations safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings, is best met by the Selected Alternative, which emphasizes:

- Reestablishment of visual connections between physical features of the park and the surrounding landscape.
- Restoration and enhancement of landscape features.
- Stabilization and preservation of historic industrial ruins.
- Increased accessibility to historic landscapes and structures.

Criterion 3

Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences, is best met by the Selected Alternative, which emphasizes:

- Coordination with landowners and the Michigan Department of Transportation on roadway signage guidelines.
- Coordination and cooperation with local communities, non-NPS landowners and park partners on planning and implementation of the CLR recommendations.
- Minimizing pedestrian-vehicle conflicts by providing visitor parking on both sides of U.S. 41.

Criterion 4

Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice, is best met by the Selected Alternative, which emphasizes:

- Maximizing the rehabilitation of significant cultural features in the historic landscapes and reduce the number of the non-contributing and incompatible landscape features.
- Working with private landowners to relocate or redevelop incompatible infill development and restore landscape elements compatible with the historic core.
- Working with local communities and landowners on guidelines for compatible development.
- Increasing the ability of visitors to experience the historic landscapes through establishment of pedestrian pathways and linkages to regional trails.
- Providing numerous interpretive waysides along pedestrian paths to allow for self-guided tours.
- Minimizing disturbance to undisturbed areas, and avoiding disturbance to archeological sites.

Criterion 5

Achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and wide sharing of life's amenities, is best met by the Selected Alternative, which emphasizes:

- Providing increased accessibility between non-NPS landowners to provide pedestrian access.
- Developing research partnerships with universities.
- Coordination of all planning and implementation efforts with partner organizations, local communities and non-NPS property owners.
- Providing visitor amenities such as picnic areas and multiple opportunities for self-guided or tour-led interpretation.

Criterion 6

Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources, is best met by the Selected Alternative, which emphasizes:

- Reuse of numerous on-site buildings and structures for visitor contact, interpretation and administrative functions.

Why the Selected Alternative Will Not Have a Significant Effect on the Human Environment

The intensity or severity of impacts resulting from implementation of the Selected Alternative is evaluated using the ten (10) criteria listed in 40 CFR 1508.27. Key areas in which impacts were evaluated include cultural resources, socioeconomics, visitor experience and park operations. As defined in 40 CFR §1508.27, significance is determined by examining the following criteria:

Criterion 1

Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.

The Selected Alternative would result in long-term minor and moderate beneficial impacts to cultural resources at the Quincy Unit of Keweenaw National Historical Park. The benefits to cultural resources result from proposals for restoration, rehabilitation and preservation of

cultural landscape features, historic structures and removal of non-contributing elements. Proposed actions in the Selected Alternative would result in no adverse effects to resources listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. There would be long-term moderate benefits to the socioeconomic environment because of the enhanced partnerships, construction activities, adaptive use of historic structures, and anticipated increases in tourism revenue and staff employment for the NPS and partner organizations. There is a potential for long-term, moderate beneficial impacts to visitor experience due to numerous landscape improvements. Landscape improvements providing benefits to visitors would include wayside exhibits throughout the Quincy Unit, improved pedestrian circulation and enhanced coordination with KHS partners. The selected alternative would result in short and long-term minor to moderate benefits to park operations through cooperative interpretive and management efforts with park partners.

Criterion 2

The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

The Selected Alternative would improve public safety and health for both NPS staff and visitors by providing multiple parking lots, which would minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, since U.S. 41 bisects the Quincy Unit. The CLR/EA recommendations include improving pedestrian access and circulation throughout the landscape as well as providing trailheads for regional bike trails. New facilities would be constructed to be accessible, as specified by the criteria of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968. Measures would be implemented to mitigate safety hazards to visitors and workers during periods of construction. Public and staff safety would be maintained through efforts such as performing construction activities during non-peak visitor season, preventing visitors and staff to enter construction areas, and limiting the extent of the construction zones.

Criterion 3

Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, parklands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The Selected Alternative does not affect any parklands, prime farmland, or wild and scenic rivers. Wetlands would be avoided by proposed actions of the selected alternative. There are no known federally listed species, or critical habitat within the park. Most extant historic and cultural resources would be rehabilitated, restored, preserved or stabilized. Landscape features that are incompatible or non-contributing to the historic significance of landscapes within the Quincy Unit would be removed from NPS owned property. Private landowners would be provided guidance on the removal of non-contributing features.

Criterion 4

The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The Selected Alternative is not highly controversial. No issues arose during the preparation of the CLR/EA from park staff and no issue was brought to the park's attention during the public review period that indicated a dispute with either the methodology or results of the analysis of topics.

Criterion 5

The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

There were no highly uncertain, unique, or unknown risks identified during either the preparation of the CLR/EA or the public review period.

Criterion 6

The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The Selected Alternative does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects since the alternative improves existing facilities while reducing impacts to the park at an already disturbed site. Furthermore, the level of development at this site proposed by the Selected Alternative is within the guidelines set by the park's Draft Resource Stewardship Plan and General Management Plan.

Criterion 7

Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.

The CLR/EA was prepared to protect the resources of the Quincy Unit from both individual impacts associated with the selected alternative and identified cumulative impacts. Likely future actions taken individually or collectively under the Draft Resource Stewardship Plan or the General Management Plan as currently written would not result in a cumulative impact to the human or natural environment.

Criterion 8

The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

The selected alternative would not have an adverse impact on cultural landscapes or historical buildings or structures listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The recommendations for archeological inventories will identify the potential for eligible archeological resources at the Quincy Unit. The Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) was initially contacted early in the preparation of the CLR/EA to provide background information on the project. A draft CLR/EA was forwarded to Michigan SHPO in the winter of 2008 for their comment. The Michigan SHPO responded with a letter stating their general concurrence with draft CLR's landscape treatment guidelines and recommendations for archeological inventories, but would wait until the public review period to fully evaluate the potential affects of the treatment alternatives. The Michigan SHPO reviewed the public review draft of the CLR / EA, which was distributed on August 10, 2009. In a phone conversation with Steve DeLong (KEWE), Brian Grenell from the SHPO explained that SHPO did not concur with the findings that there would be adverse effects to archeological resources from the proposed archeological inventories. The SHPO stated that there would be no adverse effects from the archeological inventories. An Errata Sheet was prepared addressing changes made to the document to correct this evaluation (changed from "adverse effect" to "no adverse effect"). The revised sections of the CLR / EA were forwarded to Michigan SHPO, which responded in a letter dated 28 April 2010, with concurrence that there would be no adverse effects from the proposed Selected Alternative. The Errata Sheet is included at the beginning of the CLR/EA.

Criterion 9

The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

There are no federally listed plant or animal species known within the boundaries of the Quincy Unit. Park staff sent a Section 7 coordination letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on June 29, 2007 requesting data on Threatened or Endangered species. The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) was also contacted with a letter in July 2007. The USFWS and MNFI responded with data on the Canada lynx, a federally listed threatened and state-listed endangered species that may occur in the region. Suitable habitat for the Canada lynx is large boreal forests (primarily spruce and firs) which is not present at the Quincy Unit. The MNFI also provided data on Douglas' hawthorn, a state listed species of concern that is located in Houghton County and may be within the park. Suitable habitat for the Douglas' hawthorn could exist in the disturbed lands of the Quincy Unit; however, selective vegetative management would avoid taking of this species. Subsequent to distribution of the CLR / EA for public review on August 10, 2009, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service relisted the gray wolf as an endangered species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service relisted the gray wolf in September 2009. There are no known gray wolf individuals or packs in or in the vicinity of the Quincy Unit. Treatments presented in the Selected Alternative would result in selective vegetation

management and reuse, rehabilitation of cultural resources at the Quincy Unit, which would have no effect on the gray wolf.

Criterion 10

Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The Selected Alternative would not violate any environmental protection law or regulation. Appropriate consultation, coordination, and permitting actions would be necessary prior to implementing the Selected Alternative. These actions would include Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and Section 404 and 401 permits under the Clean Water Act, as necessary.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures have been developed to minimize the degree and/or severity of adverse effects, and would be implemented, as needed, during implementation of the Selected Treatment Alternative (Alternative C).

Cultural Resources (Mitigation Measures)

- Proposed projects that would affect historic features of the cultural landscape (structures, vegetation, landscape character, etc) must comply with the requirements of *The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* and *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*.
- Until the Keweenaw National Historical Park Archaeological Inventory is completed, NPS shall conduct site/project specific archaeological assessments to determine if NRHP-eligible resources are present. If NRHP-eligible resources are identified, project redesign (to avoid impacts) or other appropriate mitigation measures would be determined through consultation with the SHPO or other appropriate parties.
- Any contractors and subcontractors utilized for construction projects would be instructed on procedures to follow in case previously unknown archaeological resources are uncovered during construction. If previously unknown archaeological resources are unearthed during construction, work shall be stopped in the area of discovery and the NPS will consult with the SHPO and appropriate parties. If impacts to significant resources cannot be avoided by redesign, mitigating measures shall be developed in consultation with the SHPO to help ensure that the informational significance of the sites is preserved. If appropriate, provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 would be implemented.
- The NPS will ensure that any contractors and subcontractors utilized for construction are informed of the penalties for illegally collecting artifacts or intentionally damaging archaeological sites or historic properties.

- To minimize the amount of ground disturbance, staging and stockpiling areas will be located at previously disturbed areas, away from visitor use areas and circulation to the extent possible. All staging and stockpiling areas will be returned to pre-construction contours following construction.

Visitor Experience (Mitigation Measures)

- To minimize the potential impact to park visitors, variations on construction timing may be considered, such as conducting a majority of the work in shoulder seasons (off peak tourist seasons).
- Construction zones shall be identified and delineated with construction tape, snow/safety fencing, or some other material prior to any construction activity. All protection measures will be clearly stated in the construction specifications and workers will be instructed to avoid conducting activities beyond the construction zone.
- Temporary interpretive panels will be provided during the construction period to inform and educate visitors regarding the project and its importance to the overall historic landscape of the Quincy Unit.

Park Operations (Mitigation Measures)

- Because soils are susceptible to erosion until revegetation takes place, standard NPS erosion control measure BMPs will be used as necessary to minimize potential erosion, including silt fences, sediment traps and erosion check dams.
- Fugitive dust generated by construction will be controlled by spraying water on the construction site, as needed. Water needed for dust control will come from park-approved sources or will be provided by contractors from sources outside the park.
- To reduce noise and emissions, construction equipment will not be permitted to idle for long periods.
- To minimize potential petrochemical leaks from construction equipment, the equipment will be regularly monitored to identify and/or repair any leaks.

Public Involvement

During the preparation of the CLR/EA, formal and informal efforts were made by the NPS to involve the public; and federal, state, and local agencies in the planning process. The park staff publicized meetings through direct letters, press releases to all local media outlets, flyers at local businesses and interviews on the local public radio station. The park staff conducted an early meeting with KHS partners and stakeholders on June 17, 2008 and a public scoping meeting on June 18, 2008. These meetings were conducted at the Franklin Township Fire Hall, which is in the Quincy Unit. Twenty persons representing many partner organizations, state and local

government and Michigan Tech University attended the stakeholder meeting. Twenty-seven individuals from the surrounding communities attended the public scoping meeting. Both scoping meetings included a walking tour of the Historic Industrial Core area. On both days, additional individuals that could not attend the meeting in the Fire Hall joined in the walking tours. Comments from the stakeholders ranged from presentation of ideas for site development to general questions regarding the unit. Individuals attending the public scoping meeting did not present any direction or recommendations that could be used for treatment alternatives, but they did ask many questions related to the unit.

A second stakeholder meeting was conducted on October 10, 2008. Meeting attendees provided comments ranging from land acquisition to site treatment possibilities.

A second public meeting was conducted on March 4, 2009 at the City of Hancock Council Chambers. This meeting generated discussion and input regarding pre-decisional landscape treatment concepts. Thirty-three individuals attended the public meeting and comments ranged from the need to prepare land development ordinances to site parking needs.

On August 10, 2009 the CLR / EA was distributed for public review and comment for a 30-day period beginning. Park staff distributed a press release to media outlets, various agencies, and members of the public that are on the park's mailing list. The Environmental Assessment was made available at the Park's administrative office and on the Park's website. When requested, copies of the Environmental Assessment were mailed to interested individuals. Copies of the Environmental Assessment were available for review at the CLK Public Library in Calumet; the Portage Lake District Library in Houghton; and the Hancock School Public Library in Hancock. The park received three comment letters, which were in support of the selected alternative. The park responded directly to each commenter with a letter. These NPS response letters are in Chapter IX: Consultation and Coordination of the environmental assessment.

Finding of No Significant Impact and No Impairment

Based on my review of the facts and analysis contained in this Environmental Assessment, which is incorporated herein, I conclude that the Selected Alternative for the CLR/EA at Keweenaw National Historical Park would not have a significant impact either by itself or in consideration of cumulative impacts. Accordingly, the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality, and provisions of National Park Service Director's Order-12 and Handbook (Conservation Planning and Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-Making) have been fulfilled. Furthermore, the Selected Alternative selected for implementation would not impair park resources or values and would not violate the NPS Organic Act. The Selected Alternative supports the enabling legislation establishing Keweenaw National Historical Park under the Antiquities Act of 1906 with the intended purpose of preserving the scientific and public interests for future generations. An Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not be prepared for implementation of the Selected Alternative.

Recommended: 
James Corless, Superintendent May 28, 2010
Date

Approved: 
Ernest Quintana, Regional Director 8-5-2010
Date