

Great Dismal Swamp National Heritage Area Feasibility Study



April 2024

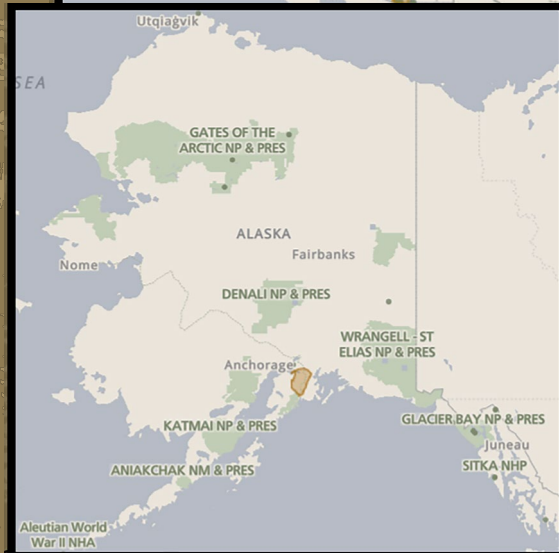
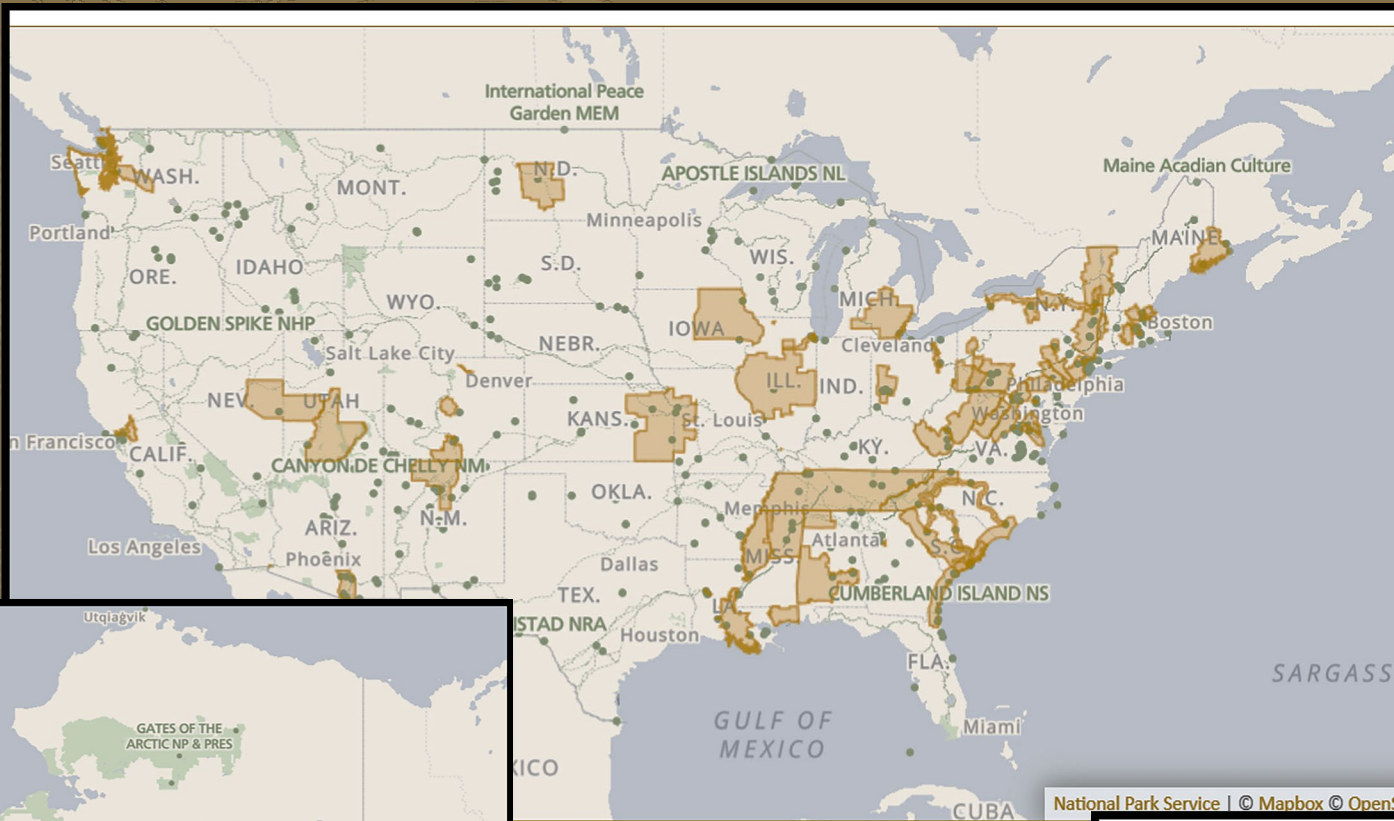
What is a National Heritage Area?

“A National Heritage Area is a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in them. Continued use of National Heritage Areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance.”



Susquehanna National Heritage Area, PA

62 National Heritage Areas in 36 States and Territories



What a National Heritage Area is not

- Federally owned
- A unit of the National Park Service
- A regulatory overlay

South Carolina National Heritage Corridor



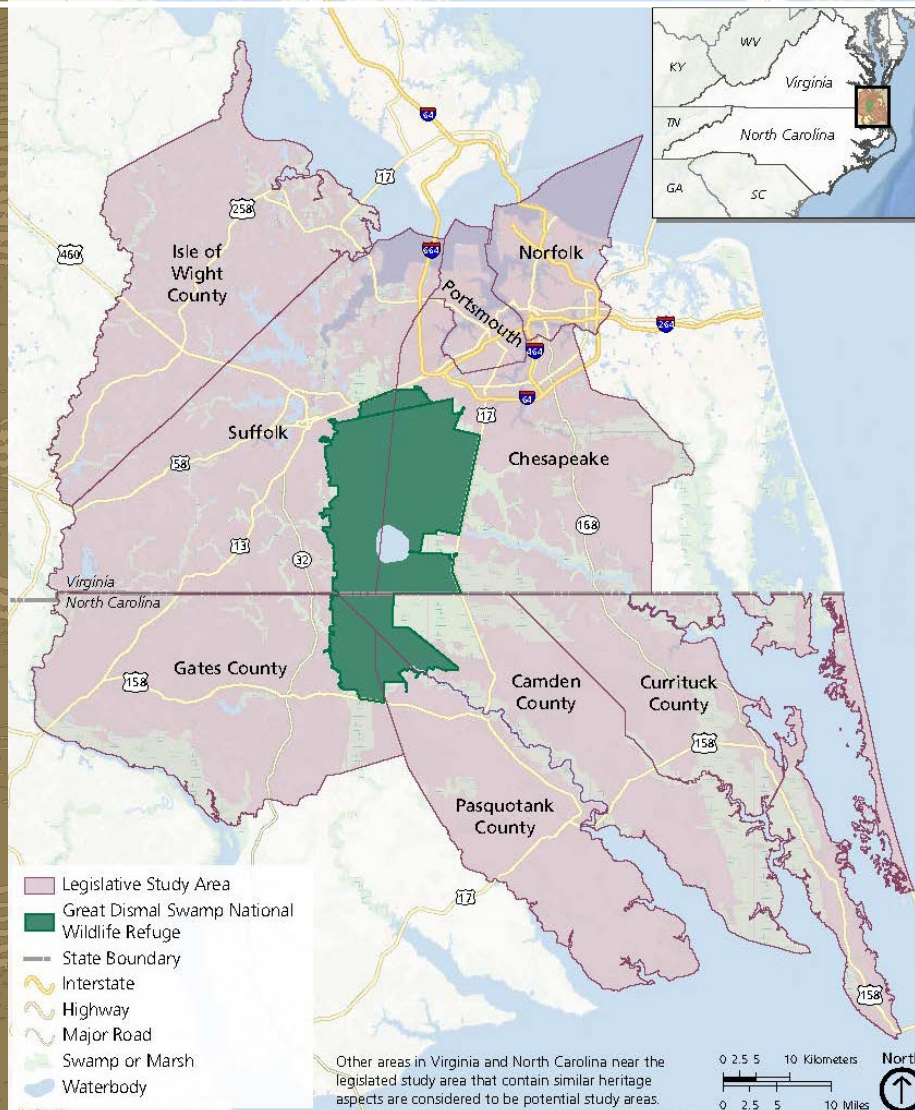
Keys to Success

The following steps have been shown to set up an NHA for long-term success:

- Completion of feasibility study
- Public involvement in planning
- Demonstration of widespread community involvement
- Commitment from key constituents



Great Dismal Swamp National Heritage Area Feasibility Study – P.L. 117-339



Virginia

Cities:

- Chesapeake
- Norfolk
- Portsmouth
- Suffolk

County:

- Isle of Wight

North Carolina

Counties:

- Camden
- Currituck
- Gates
- Pasquotank

Criteria

As a place/landscape/area

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 linking 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; Provides **outstanding** recreational and educational **opportunities**;
4. The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area **retain a degree of integrity** capable of **supporting interpretation**;

Criteria

As a public/private partnership and community assistance program

5. 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;

6. The proposed local coordinating entity and units of government supporting the designation are willing to **commit to working in partnership** to develop the heritage area while **encouraging state and local economic activity**;

7. A conceptual **boundary map** is supported by the **public**;

3-Year Study Process

2024

- Gather information
- Engage with Stakeholders
- Orientation Site Visit
- Public Engagement

2025

- Complete background research

2026

- Draft Study Report
- Internal NPS Reviews
- Complete Feasibility Study Document
- Transmit to Congress



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Questions?

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To follow the study progress, please visit:

[ParkPlanning - Great Dismal Swamp National Heritage Area Feasibility Study \(nps.gov\)](#)