



## A World Heritage Nomination for Sites of the Civil Rights Movement – What Would be Involved?

### Important Concepts

- World Heritage criteria are not the same as those for the National Register of Historic Places / National Historic Landmarks. Being the site of an event or associated with an important idea is not by itself enough.
- A WH nomination must define the “Outstanding Universal Value” (OUV) in a way that shows how the nominated properties, as a group, have global significance.
- A “serial” nomination, or one that includes discontinuous properties, must show that the properties included are those that are critical to the global significance; this will necessarily be a much smaller group than all properties associated with the Civil Rights Movement, or even the most important ones in each state or region.
- World Heritage nominations are made by the government of the United States, and there is a formal process for making decisions about what to include in a nomination, and whether and when to make a nomination. The Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife and Parks is the responsible official.
- The outcome of a nomination is decided by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, based on the advice of the International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

### Critical Tasks in Developing a Nomination

- Define the “Civil Rights Movement” in both time and geography.
  - Describe the OUV of the movement in a way that meets the World Heritage criteria, looks beyond U.S. history, and does not take for granted how it is viewed around the world.
  - Make a detailed “comparative analysis” that looks at other places around the world with similar values related to human rights movements.
  - Have a clear methodology and criteria to identify properties that contribute most strongly to the defined global significance of the series. The nomination must contain a justification for why each property is included.
  - Other factors in selecting properties will include: national significance; owner consent; high integrity and authenticity, including the setting; strong legal protection.
  - Develop and articulate an active management system, linked to the OUV, in which all the properties will participate. The nature of the system will depend on which properties are included, how they are run, etc. Define how and by whom the system will be maintained.
  - Individual sites will also need to have management plans that focus on preserving elements supporting OUV.
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### Procedural Requirements

- The National Park Service’s Office of International Affairs, which oversees the development of World Heritage nominations, recommends that the sponsors secure funds to get **advice from the international secretariat of ICOMOS** after the OUV and group of properties is preliminarily identified. Some adjustments might be needed on the basis of this advice.
- When the sponsors and the National Park Service Office of International Affairs have agreed on a feasible group of properties, the Department of the Interior must approve **adding other sites to the U.S. World Heritage “Tentative List”** to join the three Alabama churches already on the list.
- After the Tentative List has been revised, the Assistant Secretary of the Interior may, with the advice of the Federal Interagency Panel for World Heritage, consider **formally authorizing preparation of a World Heritage nomination** on the basis of the developed concept. All work done prior to this point by the sponsors is unofficial, though it can be a good investment in preparation.
- Once a nomination has been drafted, with the advice of the National Park Service Office of International Affairs, the Federal Interagency Panel meets again to consider the draft and make a recommendation to the Assistant Secretary as to **whether to submit the nomination**.
- If the Assistant Secretary decides to submit the nomination, it is sent to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, which refers the document to the international secretariat of ICOMOS to conduct a detailed review, including site visits to all the properties. ICOMOS will then make a recommendation to the World Heritage Committee as to whether to approve the nomination.

