

Guidelines for Identifying Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) on Guam Issued September 28, 2015

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide direction on identifying and evaluating Traditional Cultural Properties found on Guam. Traditional values and practices of the Chamorro people are integral to the identification of TCPs. One must understand in essence, the Chamorro way of life and belief system in order to ascribe a TCP as having (continuing) value and significance.

National Register Bulletin 38, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties*, was issued by the National Park Service in 1992 to provide guidance for determining the eligibility for the National Register of Historic Placers of properties that may possess cultural significance. Guidance illustrated that traditional cultural properties significance is derived from the role that properties play in a community's historically rooted beliefs, customs and examples. Examples are provided of locations associated with the traditional beliefs of a Native American group relative to their origins, cultural history, or the nature of the world; a rural community whose structures and patters of land use reflect cultural traditions valued by the long term residents, an urban neighborhood that is the traditional home of a particular cultural group and that reflects its beliefs and practices; and a location where a community has traditionally carried out economic, or other cultural practices important in maintaining its historical identity. Bulletin 38 then provides further information relative to identification and documentation eligibility.

For meaningful applicability to the Island of Guam, an overview of the traditional Chamorro culture of the island is essential. The traditional lifestyle of the Chamorro people has evolved from the original inhabitants influenced by migrations and assimilation of Spanish, Mexican, Filipino, and Americans that have made contributions to the culture over time that has continued to this date. The broader cultural framework revolves around the family, church, land, and sea. Social gathering and activities are associated with events and locations associated with these elements of the Chamorro lifestyle. Families gather for a variety of events such as weddings, births, funerals, and anniversaries of these events. The Catholic Church is a focal point for many of these events along with the annual fiesta for the patron saint of the parish church. Community areas function as gather places for family functions, games, sports, entertainment, dancing, and political events. Traditional land use is reflected in ranches for growing crops and raising of livestock. The nearby jungle is essential for gathering of edible plants, medicinal plants, building materials for residences and sailing vessels, hunting of deer, pigs, and crabs and are the location of the ancient spirits of the island, the *tataomo'na* and the *duendes*. Streams provided fresh water and a source of edible fish, eels, and crayfish. The ocean provides resources for consumption of sea life and a source of salt along with the medium for sailing to other areas of the island and other islands in the region. On land, ancient routes and paths connected the people of the island.

The traditional cultural places of Guam therefore, represent the locations for Chamorro traditional practices. This would include groupings of family residences, village churches and social halls, mayor's offices, cemeteries, ball fields and cockfighting arenas, and coastal gathering places. The traditional *lancho* embodies the cultural practice of farming and ranching including coconut groves. The pristine jungle is essential for the continuing practices of harvesting the flora and fauna resources of land while the ocean and coastline continue to embody locations for traditional fishing and collection of octopus and lobster. The beliefs of the spirits of the ancestors are embodied in such landscape components as banyan trees and geological formations such as Fouha Rock.

Identifying Place-based Traditional Cultural Practices

For the identification of Traditional Cultural Properties, it is essential for researchers to be proficient with the island's culture prior to the identification of the traditional cultural practices associated place-based locations. This can be accomplished by teams of ethnographers, oral historians, and practitioners traversing the "cultural landscape". Further, a multi-tiered approach that involves media advertising requesting practitioners utilizing an area to self-identify to the research team; oral testimony collection from those practitioners; and field visits to identify the landscape parameters and features of the practices.

Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) National Park Service (NPS) Worksheet

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), a traditional cultural property must:

- **Be a tangible place.** The NRHP does not list cultural practices or beliefs. Tangible means that you must be able to physically locate a property. It does not mean that you have to have physical, man-made features or items at the place. A mountain, a street corner, and a pueblo are all tangible places.
- **Be important** to the community today and play the same role in the community's traditions as it did in the past.
- **Have been important for at least 50 years.** For example, a place where pow-wows are held now, but were not held 25 years ago, probably does not meet the 50-year rule. The use of the property, however, does not have to be continuous over the last 50 years, but there should be a pattern of use or continued value.
- **Have integrity.** By regulation integrity means integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The importance of each of these elements varies depending on the nature of the property. For TCPs, integrity can often be evaluated in terms of the strength of the property's association with the traditions of the community and the property's condition. **The association between the place and the community's traditions must be strong.** For example, if the traditional activity can be carried out anywhere, then there is no link between the activity and the place (ritual bathing – in any stream or just in a particular spring; fishing – any local source or a specific hole or spot designated by a deity; hunting – any natural area where game is available or particular sacred hunting ground). Every year since 1832, the Seneca and Cayuga Indians have conducted specific ceremonies at what is now the Basset Grove Ceremonial Grounds in Oklahoma. This property definitely has integrity of association and location. The property's condition is just as important to consider. If commercial buildings surround a TCP that should have a pristine natural environment, then the property has little integrity of condition. Integrity of condition, however, should be evaluated from the perspective of those who value or use the property. For example, a New Mexico Hispanic community has conducted traditional dances in a specific area since the early 1900s. The three-acre dance site now includes a bar, community center, and parking lot. Nevertheless, the ongoing use of the site in much the same manner as has been conducted for over the last 80 years demonstrates that the dance site still has integrity of condition for that particular tradition. If the changes had somehow forced the termination of dances there, or their relocation, the integrity of condition would be lacking, despite the fact that the Hispanic community might still regard the old site as a special location.
- **Have definable boundaries.** Establishing boundaries can be a problem. In many cases, the idea that there is a "real" boundary is absurd. Nevertheless, a TCP listed in the NR must have definable, or at least defensible, boundaries. Geological or natural formation traditional cultural properties are often problematic because it is difficult to establish where a formation begins or ends. For example, the top of a mountain is usually obvious, but where is the bottom. Knowledgeable members of the traditional community should be consulted for guidance about what criteria are important in deciding where, for example, a mountain begins or ends. Their comments should be supported by oral tradition, ethnographic evidence, or physical evidence. Perhaps the answer lies in what constitutes a mountain, or a significant place, not where does it begin and end. Is the river at the mountain's base part of the mountain or is the river its own entity distinct from the mountain? The answers will vary by community.

- **Have defensible boundaries.** Defensible boundaries should be based on the characteristics of the property, how it is used, and why it is important.
- **Meet NR Criteria.** Like any other property, to be listed in, or eligible for listing in, the NR, a TCP must meet one or more of the NR criteria. TCPs do not have criteria all of their own. TCPs are almost always listed under Criterion A (and sometimes B) for their association with historical events or broad patterns of events.

Not all TCPs are eligible for the NRHP. Establishing the community's traditions may best be approached by looking first at the traditional practices and then finding where these consistently intersect the landscape. I think that for the long term the model to follow is the one we use to identify historic properties. However, instead of teams of archaeologists walking the physical landscape we need to have teams of ethnographers/oral historians traversing the "cultural landscape", as it is or was. I suggest a multi-tiered approach that involves multimedia advertising asking practitioners utilizing an area to self-identify to the research team; oral testimony collection from those practitioners; and finally, field visits to identify any landscape parameters/features associated with the practice. If we hope to identify significant Traditional Cultural Properties then an essential first step would be to identify the associated place-based traditional cultural practices.

Although the TCP's are set up with a 50 year threshold the knotty problem might be to identify practices that well pre-date WWII. The cultural and property disruptions accompanying the post-World War II administration of the island may not only make identification difficult but may also mean that continuity of practice is not to be found. How to address a hiatus in practice attributable to this situation needs to be negotiated.