

PART I
CHAPTER IV
What Are Cultural Resources?

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4-1.0-What Are Cultural Resources?

Cultural resources are any prehistoric or historic remains or indicators of past human activities, including artifacts, sites, structures, landscapes, and objects of importance to a culture or community for scientific, traditional, religious, or other reasons. Cultural resource management is the development and maintenance of programs designed to investigate, manage, preserve, and protect cultural resources in compliance with state and federal laws. Development and maintenance of our infrastructure, particularly our transportation system, is necessary for growth and progress, and such activities can have impacts on cultural resources. In these circumstances, decisions must be made to strike a balance between practical growth and the protection of cultural resources.¹ As a result of this need for balance regarding cultural resource management, federal and state agencies have created laws and regulations for the protection of cultural resources.

It is important to note that the term *historic property*, as it pertains to the Section 106 process, is defined as any cultural resource listed on or eligible for listing on the [National Register of Historic Places](#). These can include various resource types such as historic and prehistoric archaeological sites, houses, historic districts, engineering features such as roadbeds, railways, or bridges, battlefields, historic and cultural landscapes, and traditional cultural properties. However, not all cultural resources are by definition historic properties. They must be determined eligible for listing or must already be listed in the NRHP.

Please refer to Part II of the Cultural Resources Manual for detailed information regarding Section 106 and how historic properties are identified and evaluated.

¹ K. Kris Hirst, Cultural Resources Management, a Process.
http://archaeology.about.com/od/culturalresource/qt/crm_definition.htm.

References

Hirst, K. Kris

n.d. Cultural Resources Management, A Process. Electronic document accessed January 2014, http://archaeology.about.com/od/culturalresource/qt/crm_definition.htm.